

BUDDHIST KASHMIR



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Prof. F. M. Hassnain



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Foreword

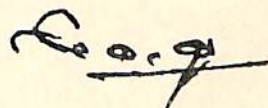
I am glad to know that Mr. F.M. Hassnain has been invited to deliver a course of lectures on the history and culture of Kashmir at the University of Nagoya, Japan.

From ancient times, Kashmir has been a meeting ground of many a culture. Excavations at Burzhom, near Srinagar, have established that about 5000 years back, the earliest inhabitants of Kashmir were pit or cave dwellers. The valley was peopled by the Nagas, the Pisachas and the Yakshas in the beginning. Then came the Aryans, the Huns and the Kushanas. Kashmir became a centre of the Buddhist learning around 1st century A.D. and it was from here that the Mahayana Buddhism spread out.

Kashmir Saivism tried to blend and harmonise all the previous religious disciplines and gave us what may be termed as the philosophy of humanism. Then came Islam and thus was brought into existence a harmonised and a mixed culture which is the hallmark of Kashmir even today. The fusion of many cultures and philosophies of thought has made the people here tolerant in outlook and emancipated in their approach to problems of day-to-day life and in this the great religions of the world have all contributed.

I am glad that Mr. Hassnain has in his work "Buddhist Kashmir" attempted to trace the development of Buddhism in Kashmir and Ladakh. The subject should prove of interest to our friends in Japan also.

Srinagar,
October 19, 1969.



(G.M. Sadiq)
Chief Minister
Jammu & Kashmir



Preface

This book is the outcome of my lectures on the subject in various universities in Japan during 1969. I am indebted to Dr. Tokan D. Sumi, M.A.D. Ind., Professor of Linguistics, Aichikyoiku University, Okazaki, Aichi-ken, Japan, who helped me in this work. He is the only authority in Japan on Kashmirology and has translated Kalhana's Rajatarangini into Japanese. I am also indebted to Prof. Jean Naudou of the University of Paris, France and Prof. Alayev of the University of Moscow, U.S.S.R. who encouraged me to pursue my studies in the field. For photographs, I have to thank the State Museum and its Curator, Mr. J.L. Bhan and the State Information Department.

My lectures and this manuscript was read by late Mr. G.M. Sadiq, the then Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. He felt very keen in the subject and wrote a foreword. May his soul rest in peace.

My sincere thanks are due to Mr. Kartar Singh of Light & Life Publishers and Cambridge Printing Works, Delhi for bringing out this book. They have taken much pains to do the job in a month's time, for which they deserve congratulations.

Index has been prepared by Mr. Khurshid Ahmed and Mr. Ishtiaq Fida, of the Kashmir University. Their first attempt is simply praiseworthy.

1st August 1973
No. 1, Gogji Bagh,
Srinagar, Kashmir,
India.

F.M. Hassnain

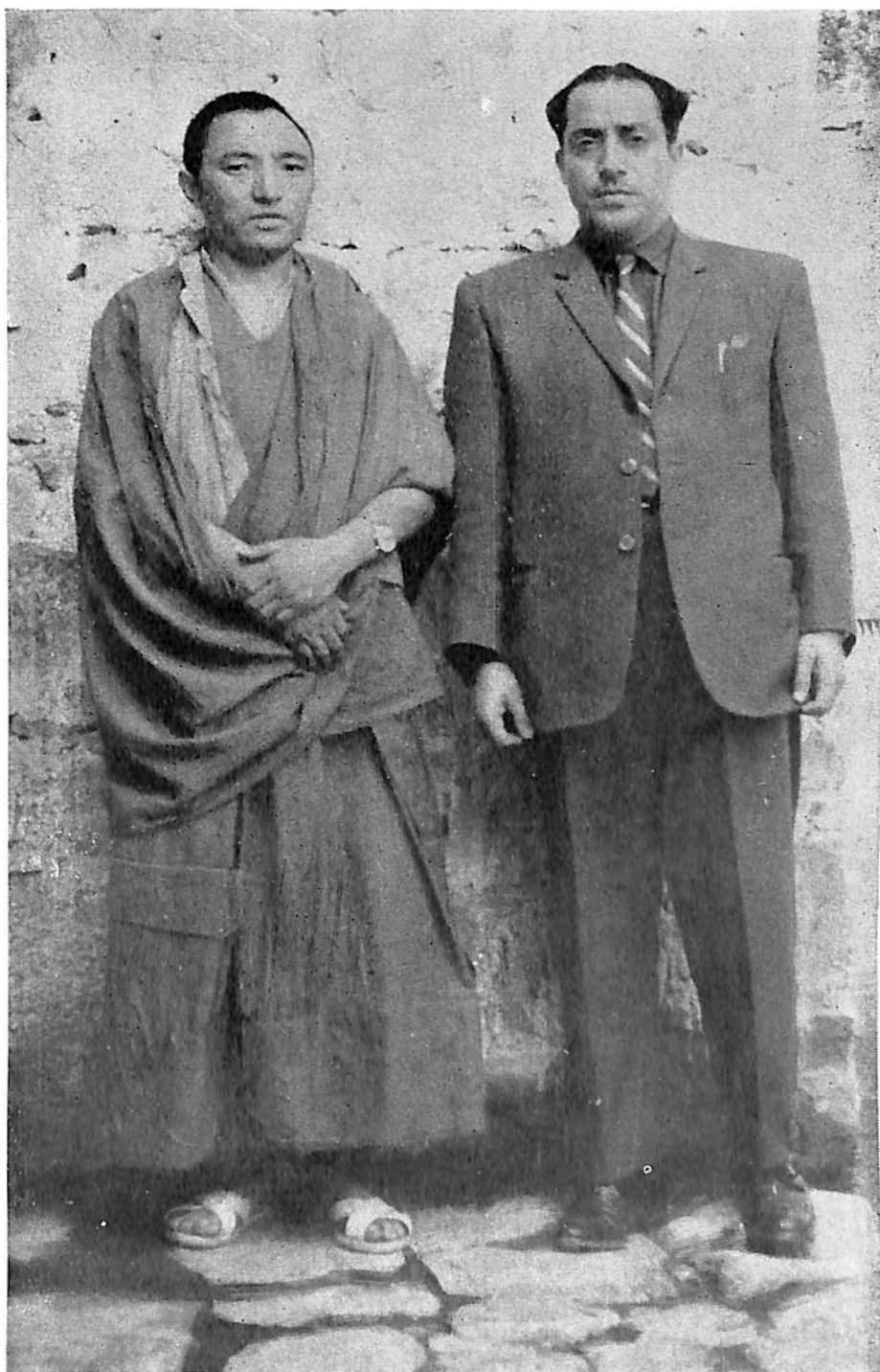


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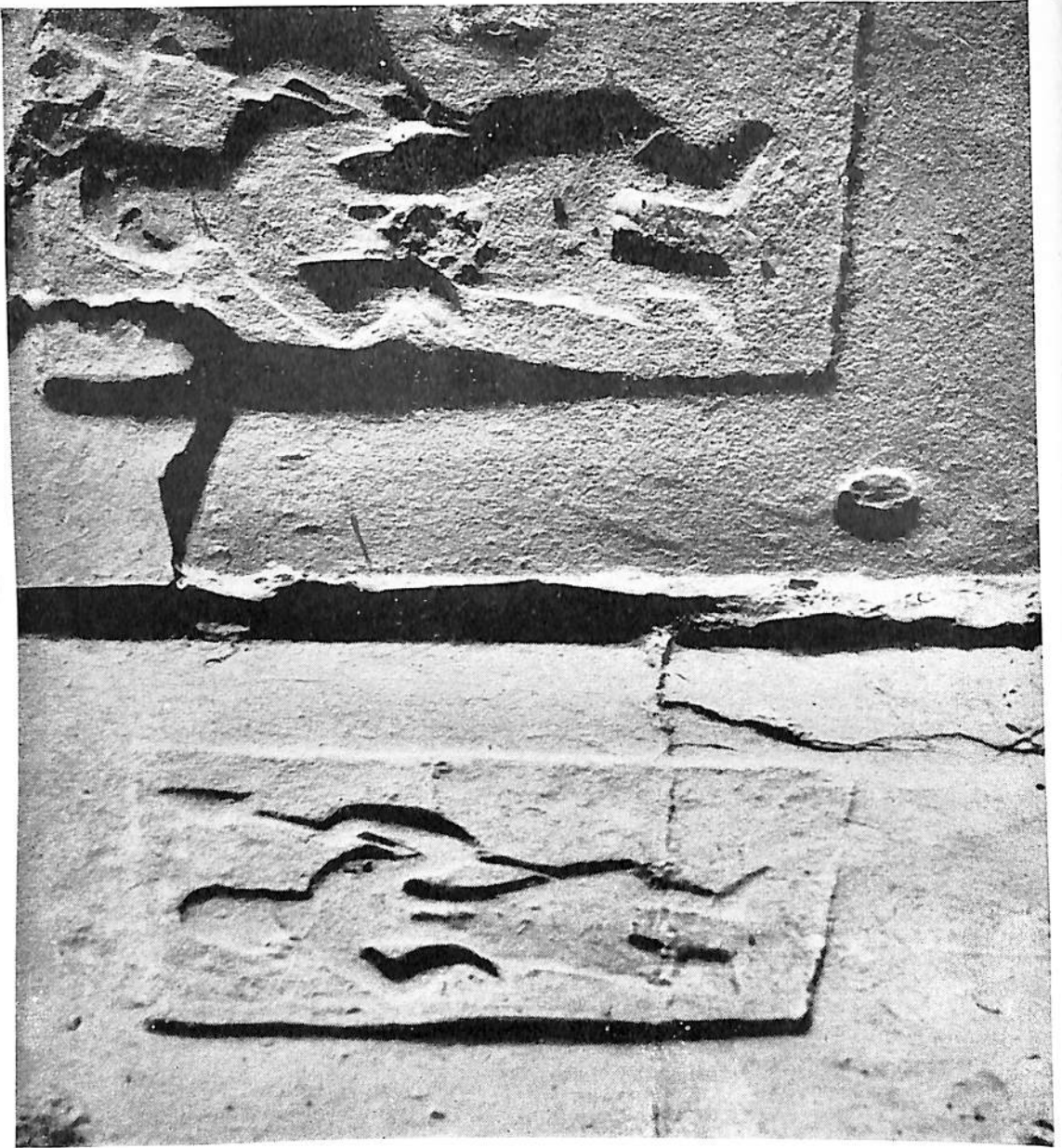
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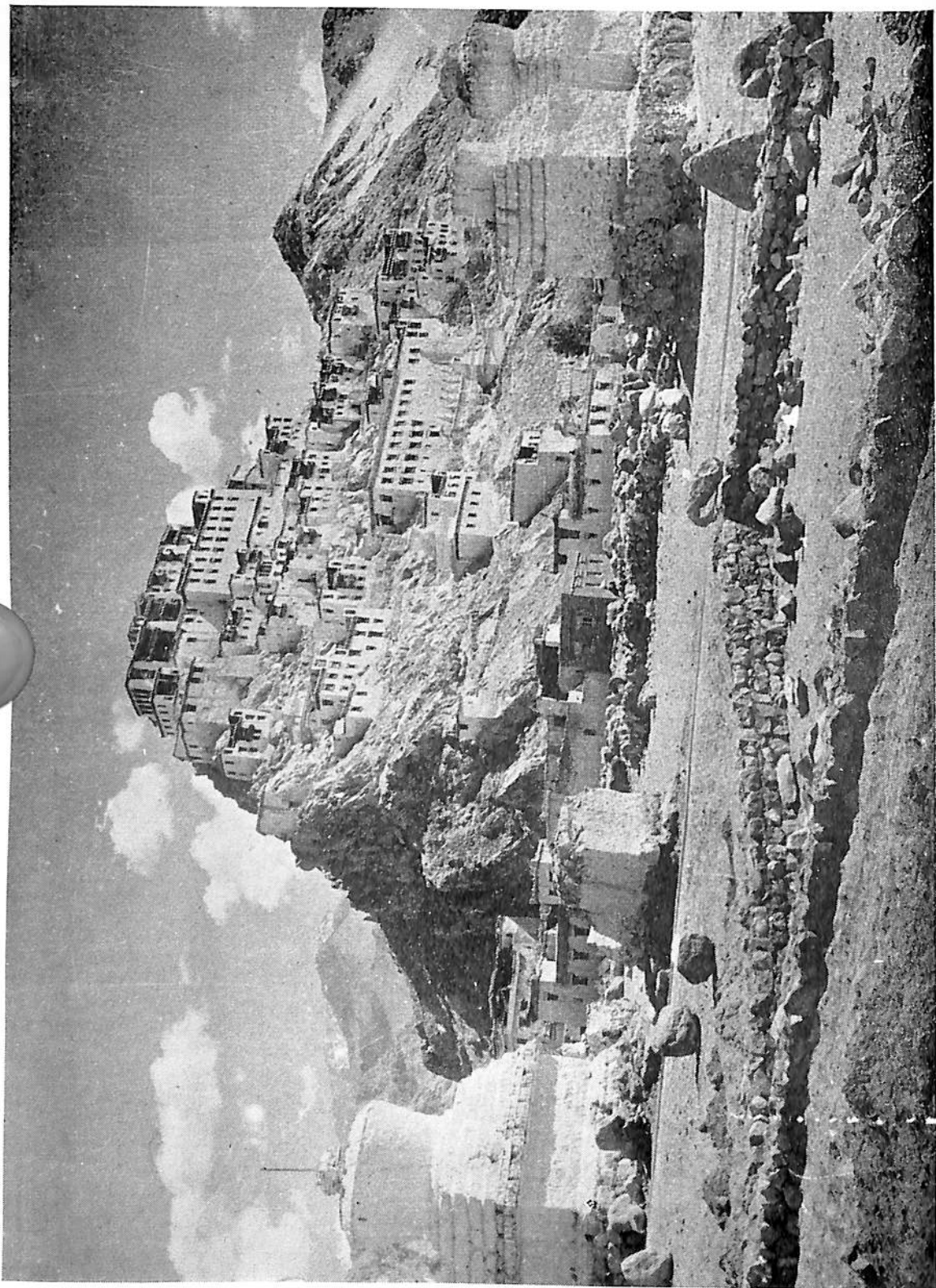


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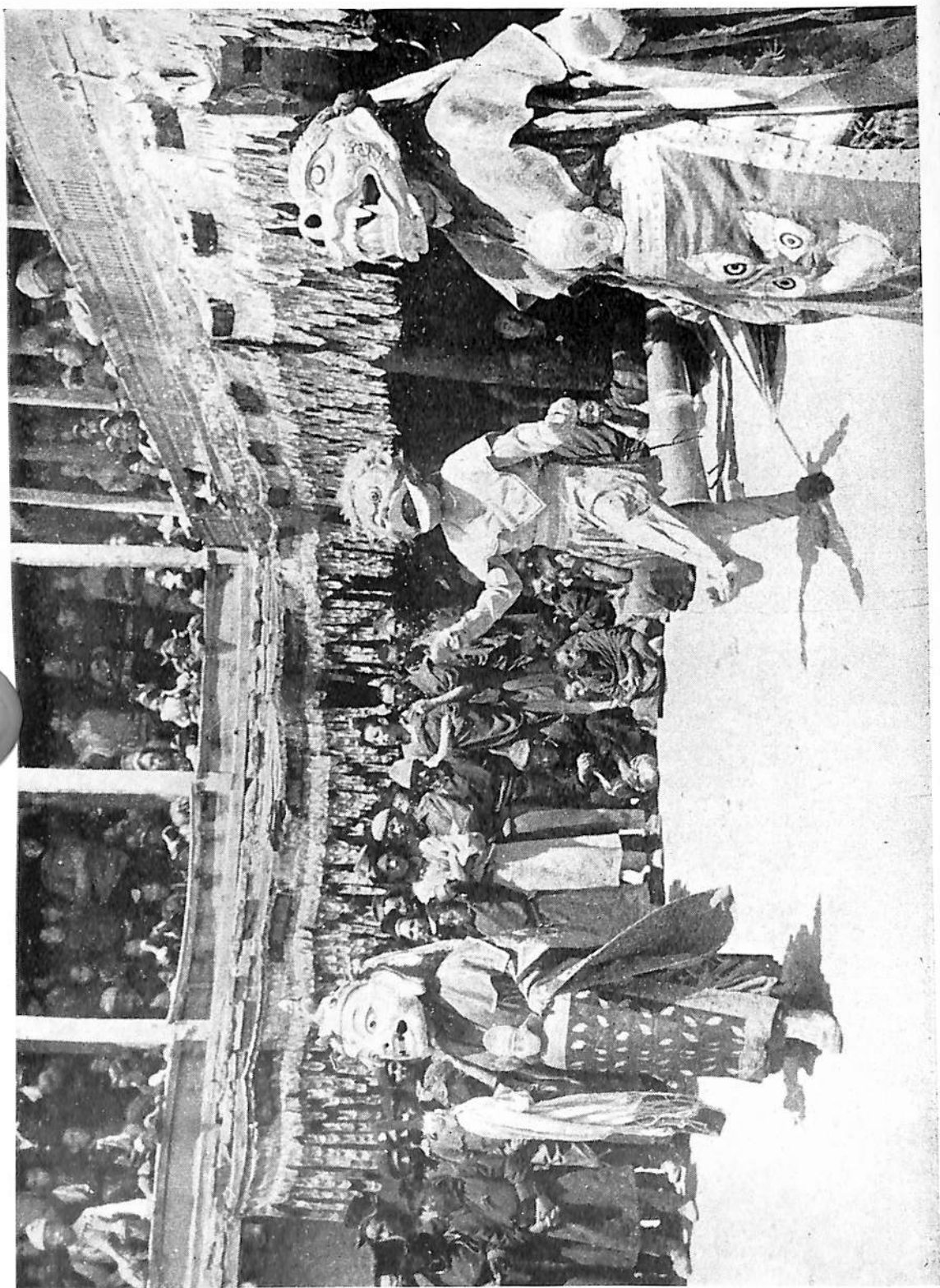


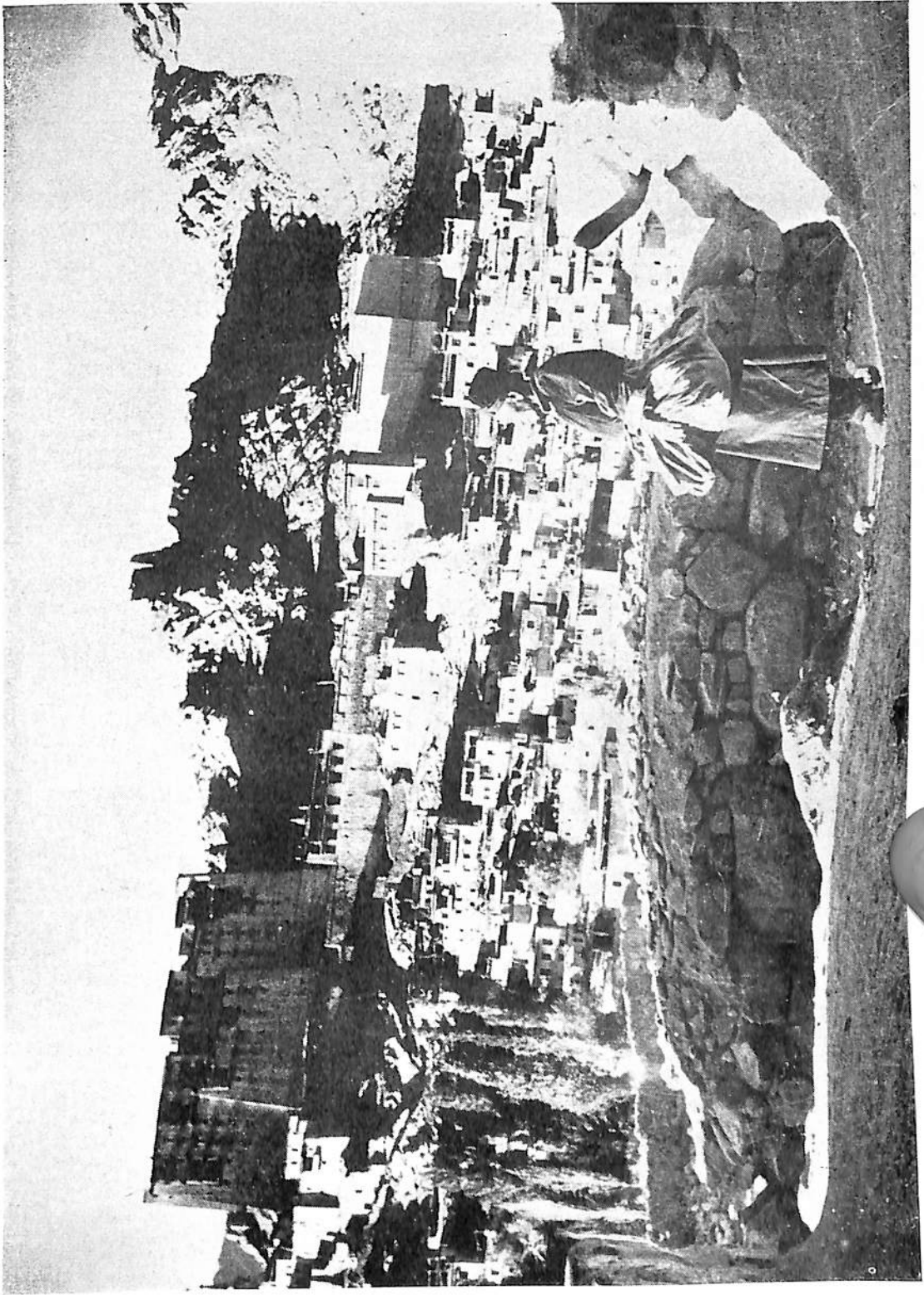
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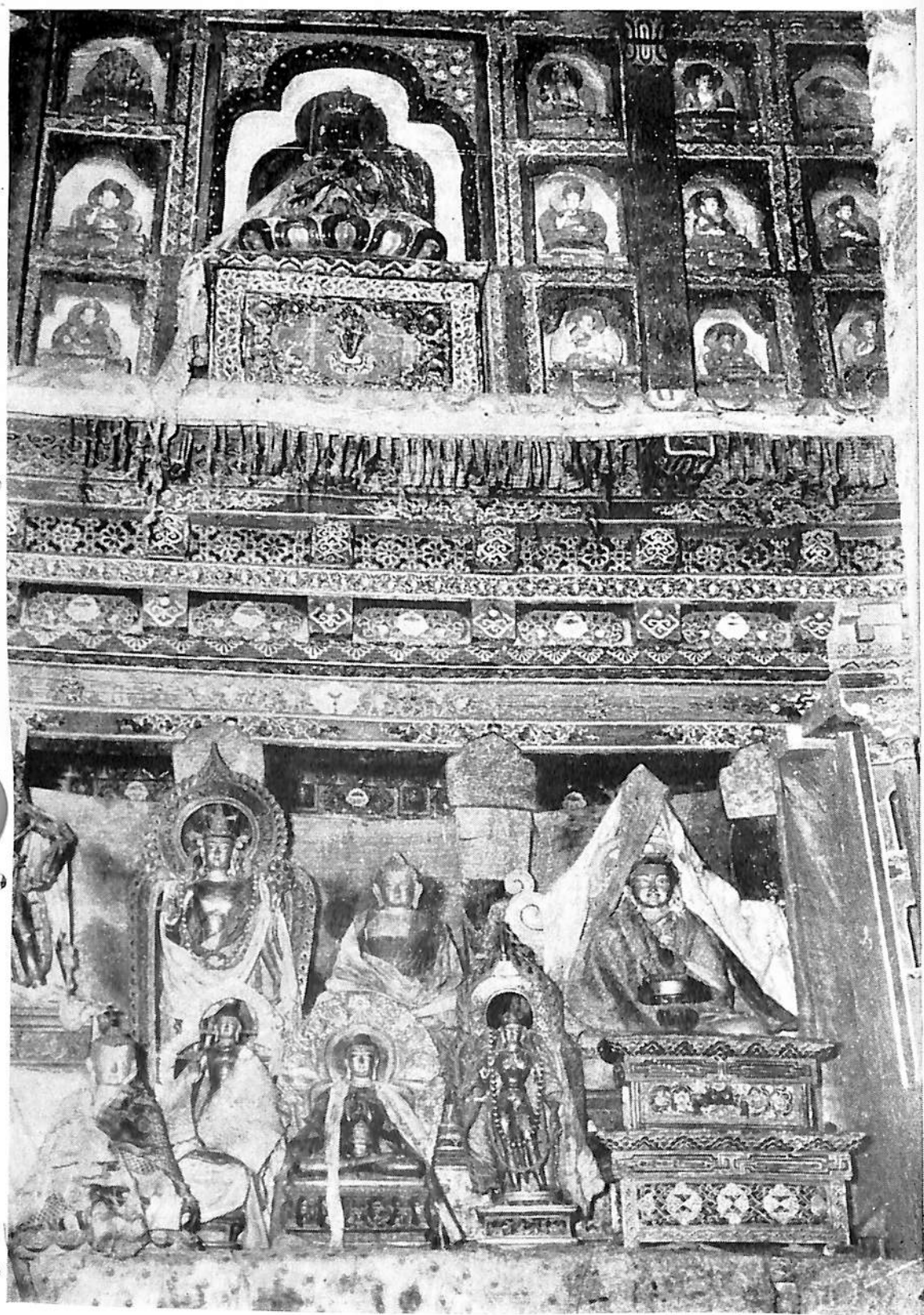














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The Holy Son of the Gods

“There were diffused ten millions and one hundred distinct suns and moons;
And the 1,000 millions of gardens of lotuses, each consisting of the four continents;
Which are all surrounded by the circular rampart;
All these appear as enumerators of Sag-thubs’s name.”

Rnam-bsad-mnon-pahi-mdzod. (Kosa)

There are five great countries, sixty-two barbarian nations, sixty ultra barbarian nations, eighteen large provinces and twenty-four minor kingdoms. South was born from the womb, north was born from natural impulse, east was born from moisture and the west was born out of an egg. Then there is the tree of life, which is known as Bodhi tree, which gives the nectar of life. Those who are born on the twigs of the tree; those who eat its flowers; those who eat its fruits are the holy men. Some live on holy tea tree and some live on meat, greas and their food is flood and flesh.¹

1. Antiquities of Indian Tiben, II. pp. 65-66

Having tested the fruits and juices of the trees of life, people grew in number. They became firm and beautiful. But after many years, they began to fight and the fruits and the juices disappeared. They lamented and through Buddha's compassion there appeared on the surface of the earth gardens of cane. They ate and enjoyed it but when again, they begin to hate and fight, it also disappeared. They again lamented and wept and through the grace of Buddha, rice grew in the world. They embraced each other and began to live in peace.

The rulers of the world are divided into two catagories : Buddha-rulers and the creature-rulers. The Buddha rulers do good to the humanity.

The king over the 3,000 worlds of suffering beings is Sakya-thub-pa (Sakya-muni-Buddha). The seven Buddhas are exalted beyond this world among the 1002 Buddhas; they have power over transmigration, and they are Sakya Buddhas.

Sakya-muni-Buddha is the holy son of the gods. Before his advent to this good earth, he looked for a clan, a country, a time, a family and a lady, so that he could allow himself to be born. When the people in Aryavarta started quarreling with each other and famines took root there. Gautama was born to Karnika in Potala. He became an ascetic under Krishnavarna. Seeing the lines of Gautama's line of lineage, the Rishi told him to beget a family for the sake of posterity. But Gautama said that as he was tormented with misery all around, he could not beget a family. The Rishi produced moisture from the clouds and Gautama placed two drops of semen, which were placed on the two leaves of sugar cane. These drops ripened into two boys and lineage of Gautama continued.¹

55,000 generations after, Zas-gtsan (Suddhodana) became the ruler of the Sakyas. He was wise, kind and

1. La-dvags-rgyal-rabs, trans. A.H. Francke

generous. He did not follow the evil ways. He married the two daughters of the King Legs-par-rabs-bsad (Suppera Buddha). Their names were Sgyu-hphrul-ma (Maya) and Sgyu-hphrul-chen-mo (Mahamaya). Each had 500 maid servants.

When Buddha looked out for the race, the country, the time, the lineage, and the mother, he entered the womb of Mahamaya. Having remained there for 12 months, he was born from the right armpit of the queen, without being defiled by the impurities of the womb. This happened on the 8th day of the little spring month. He had 32 marks of greatness and was possessed with 80 physical perfections.

According to the Buddhist chronicals housed in the Hemis Gumpa in Ladakh, Buddha was born in about 1600 B.C.

He received the name of Don-thams-cad-grub-pa (Sarvarthasiddha). He grew up into a beautiful youth adorned with qualities of head and heart. He acquired proficiency in 5 branches of science. In strength he was superior to all. His father asked him to marry a princess of his choice but he declined saying that the desire is the root cause of sorrow and suffering. But his father did not agree and insisted of him to have a queen. In order to avoid, he wrote down qualities of the bride, he would like to have and the qualities were difficult and irksome. The king directed that seven copies of the notice be published and handed over to seven Brahmins and circulated in all lands, so that the wanted bride could be found out. In a suyambra, which was attended to by all girls, Buddha presented Sa-tsho-ma (Gopa) with a ring and married her. With her, he married 104,000 maidens including Grags-hdzina-ma (Yasodhara).

The text of the notice was under :—

“Bring hither that maiden, who has the required qualities, whether she be of the royal tribe, or, of the Brahmin caste, or of the

gentry, or of the citizens. My son requires qualities of truth and virtues alone ; he has no regard for tribe or family extractions."¹

He saw the unbearable misery of birth, cruel misery of illness and old age and terrifying misery of decay and death and thus he decided to renounce the world and find way for the salvation of mankind. When he was 35, he subdued the devil (Mara) and became a perfect Sans-rgyas (Buddha).

The above is the life story of Buddha in the various Ladakhi chronicles. Now, it is proposed to complete this story from historical as well as archaeological sources.

Buddhist Legends :

It is narrated that before his advent in this world, Gautama Buddha was Boddhisattva or Buddha potentia, in heaven. It was at the request of the gods that he agreed to descend on earth and preach the Dharma for the salvation of mankind.² He was the son of Raja Siddhodana, the Chief of the Sakya clan of Kapilavastu in Jambudvipa, situated in Nepal, near the Indo-Nepal border.³

Queen's dream :

Buddha's mother, Queen Maya, conceived Buddha in Asadha (June-July). For seven days the Queen avoided all intoxicants and spent her time in giving alms to the poor and in prayers. On the seventh night, she dreamt that four gods carried her in her bed and to the Himalayas and their queens gave her a bath. She was clothed in heavenly attire and anointed with heavenly perfumes. Then she conceived Gautama. Queen Maya's dream has been represented in many sculptures.⁴ On waking from her dream, Queen Maya went to the Asoka grove and sent for the king Siddhodana.

1. Rgya-cher-rol-pa (Lalitavistara)

2. Nagarjunakonda limestone panel, 3rd century A.D.

3. Ancient India, B.G. Gokhale, p. 156

4. Maya's dream : 2nd century, Govt. Museum, Madras.

The Queen related her dream to the king and asked for its interpretation. The king asked for the Brahmins, and ordered them to discover the meaning of the dream. They said, "a great son shall be born unto you. Two paths lie before the child to be : If he stays at home, he will be the king of the universe; if he leaves his home, he will be a living Buddha, who will conjure hearts of the mankind." The astrologers had predicted that he will become an ascetic.¹

Buddha's birth :

At the time of her confinement, Queen Maya set out on her journey in a palanquin along with her sister, Mahaprajapati Gautame, towards her parents home. In the course of her journey she stopped in the Lumbini grove, which is situated 10 miles away from Kapilavastu. She felt fatigue and the pangs of travail. Her right hand caught hold of a branch of the Asoka tree, under which she was standing. With the left hand she supported herself on the shoulders of her sister.² Immediately, the gods came to offer salutation. Thus, did Siddhartha, the great Buddha came to the world. This event took place in about 1600 B.C. or in 623 B.C. or 685 B.C. according to the Sinhalese and Siamese sources. The first bath was given to Buddha in the state palace and the Naga Kings: Nanda and Upananda poured water.³ The child took seven steps and exclaimed : "I will cross the ocean of existence." These steps have been represented by lotuses in various paintings. Queen Maya died after seven days and Gautama was brought up by his aunt, Mahaprajapati Gautme.⁴

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1. Ancient India, B.G. Gokhale., p. 156
 2. Stone relief, Govt. Museum, Srinagar : Kashmir
 3. Sarnath sculpture, 5th century B.C. Indian Museum, Calcutta
 4. Ancient India, B.G. Gokhale. p., 156

Childhood :

Siddhartha grew under the care of eight nurses. At that time Asita, a saint from the Himalayas came to pay respects and homage to him. He went to school and learnt reading and writing as well as archery. But he was always meditative. The king tried his best to divert Siddhartha's thoughts towards pleasure of the world¹.

Buddha's marriage :

When he was sixteen, he was married to Gopa (Yashodhara), the daughter of Dandapani. For this purpose a *suyumbra* was held. All the maidens joined the household of the prince. The king tried to keep the prince in comfort and luxury. Three palaces were placed at his disposal. "He environed him on all sides with all that was fair and delightful, in order that the knowledge of the sorrow of the world might be shut out from his eyes."²

The three encounters :

Buddha saw and realized the impact of old age, disease and death; when he saw an old man, a sick person and a dead body. This resulted in giving him the first touch of the awakening and he decided to search the way of salvation.³

Rahula's birth :

A son was born to Yashodhara, who was named as Rahula. There was great rejoicing in the palace. On the seventh day Buddha left his parents, his wife and his child, and went out of his father's capital, leaving his attachment of his beloved wife, lovely child and his wealth and kingdom. Thereupon he, whose eyes were like pure lotuses,

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1. Buddha, Ananda Coomaraswamy., pp. 9-10
 2. Four Great Religions, Annie Besant., p. 105
 3. The life of Buddha, Edward Thomas., p. 51

looked back at the city and resolved declaring that "I shall not enter Kapilavastu, till I have seen the bourne beyond life and death."¹

In search of the Light :

Accompanied by Chandaka, his groom, he passed through the lands of the Sakyas, Koliyas and the Mallas.² At a place Anupiya, he changed his dress. He gave his royal robes and ornaments to his servant; cut off his hair and became a sadhu. He travelled many places in search of spiritual teachers. He learnt different stages of meditation and then he thought to find his own way for salvation of the mankind. He reached Gaya and started meditation near the river Neranjara. He was reduced to a skeleton due to the practice of rigid austerities. But he realised that he cannot achieve enlightenment by fasting and killing of body. He started taking food and meditate at the foot of the Bodhi tree. He conquered fear as well as desires. At last "he acquired in the first watch of the night, the knowledge of previous existences, in the middle hour of the night, the divine vision and in the last part of the night, the knowledge of the causative process. Thus he attained omniscience."

Buddha's message :

Buddha declared the noble Eightfold Path, namely right views, right intentions, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right meditation, as his message for salvation for human misery and pain.³

Buddha taught the world to treat even the lowest creatures as equal to man. He wanted to extinct all that is

1. Buddha-carita, V. pp. 83-84

2. The life of Buddha, Edward Thomas., p. 61

3. Dhammacakkappavattana-Katha, Mahavagga, Part I. pp. 15-16

vicious and corrupt in us. His was the right path, right speech, right thought and right conduct. He insisted on the purity of life and his boundless love engulfed the whole world. There is the imprint of Buddhistic influence on the whole of Asia, which includes India, China, Japan, Burma, Ceylon and the Malay States. For Asia to be not for Asia but the whole world, it has to re-learn the message of the Buddha and deliver it to the whole world.¹

1. Mahatama Gandhi in Harijan, dated 24-12-1938

Buddhism in Kashmir

“The valley of the blue forests would become an abode for meditating bhiksus.”

Mulasarvastivada

The valley of Kashmir, in the Himalayas is surrounded by Ladakh, Jammu, Poonch and the tribal regions of Keran, Karnah, Baltistan and Daradistan. It occupies a central position in Asia. Ladakh lies to the east of the Kashmir valley. Baltistan and Daradistan surround it from the north. Jammu and Poonch lie towards the south of the valley. During ancient times, Kashmir was connected with Gandhara and both formed one political unit. The Greeks who refer to Kashmir as Kaspapyros, described it as one of the cities of Gandhara.¹ To-Yeng and Sung-yuan (578 A.D.) called it as Shie-mi, while Huien Tsuang (631 A.D.) described it as Ka-shu-mi-la. It has been asserted that the Chinese have referred to Kashmir as Kapin or Kipin, but that is not correct, because the geographical description of

1. On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, Thomas Waters., p. 27

Kapin or Kipin corresponds to Chitral or Kabul.¹ The Tibetans refer to Kashmir as Khachul but the valley is known as Kashrat in Daradistan. Kashmir is known to its inhabitants as Kashmir.²

Kashmir is surrounded by a girt of mountains, which is crossed through a few mountains. Ou-Kong has described the 3 phases leading to the valley. One pass leads from Tou-fan (Tiben); the other from Po-lin (Baltistan) and the third from Kien-to-lo (Gandhara). It is evident that Kashmir had established links with the people of Ladakh, Tibet, Gilgit, Taxila and Peshawar from earliest times.

Kashmir is known as the paradise on earth. It has been acclaimed as a land of bliss, peace and contentment. It may be noted that after its exile from the place of its birth, Buddhism found its refuge in Kashmir.³ "The influence of Kashmir was very marked, especially in the spread of Buddhism beyond India. From Kashmir it penetrated to Qandhar and Kabur and thence over Bactria; Tibetan Buddhism has also its essential origin from Kashmir; so great is the importance of this region in the history of this religion."⁴

Early settlers in Kashmir :

The three earliest settlers in Kashmir were the three tribes, known as the Nagas, the Pisachas and the Yakshas. They came from Nagar, Hunza and other areas of Daradistan. In ancient period of our history, each tribe had its settlement around a lake or a spring. In Kashmir, a spring is known as a nag. These early settlers had to clear forests from wild animals and snakes, whom they feared and respected. As such these people started worship of snakes.

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1. Northern India, L. Patech., Serie Orientale Roma II
 2. The Valley of Kashmir, Lawrence., p. 12
 3. Les Bouddhistes Kashmiriens au Moyen Age, Jean Naudou., p. 1
 4. Der Buddhism, Vassilyev., pp. 1—44

Then came the Aryan tribes, who also introduced their customs in the valley. They met with opposition from the Nagas.

In ancient literature, Kashmir was a part of Gandhara, which may be termed as a cultural or political unit extending from Anangnag in Kashmir to Peshawar, with Taxila, as its centre. Before the rise of Buddhism in Gandhara, the whole area was under the Nagas. In old traditions, we find some big scholars, who belong to the Naga race. Kapil, who is considered the founder of materialistic philosophy or the Sankiya-darshan was a Naga. Patanjali, the author of Paramaratha-sara, who is also known as an autara of Shesha-naga, was also a Naga. In the same way, Naga-arjuna, and Naga-bodhi, who command much respect in the Buddhist world, were also Nagas. These Nagas often rose against the Aryans. They were against the Aryan caste system, their religious phanthom and superiority complex. Hence, when the message of Buddhism reached them, they were the first to accept it. It is certain that Buddhism came to Gandhara and Kashmir at the same time. In the Kashmiri chronicles, it has been mentioned that 150 years prior to Naga-arjuna, a Buddhist scholar, Sakya-simha, preached Buddhism in Kashmir.¹ Naga-arjuna lived in the 1st century A.D.

Buddism in Kashmir :

Rajatarangini begins at the time of the Kuru war, which occurred some time between the 12th and the 14th century B.C.² Gonada I of Kashmir lived in that period and the date has been fixed to 1260 B.C.³ Surrendra is the first Buddhist ruler of Kashmir, who built the first vihara in

1. Traikh-i-Hassan, Vol. II. p. 43

Tarikh-i-Kashmir, Fauq., p. III

2. A note on Kalhana's Rajatarangini, R.C. Dutt, Calcutta Review. 1880

3. Ibid

Kashmir.¹ His reign can be fixed in the middle of the 1st century B.C. It is recorded that during the rule of Asoka (269-227 B.C.), some monks of the Sthaviravadin school fled away to Kashmir due to the lack of royal patronage.² The Ceylonese sources reveal that it was Asoka of Maghada, who deputed Mijhantika to Kashmir and Gandhara as a missionary.³ According to the Chinese sources, it was Madhyantika, a disciple of Ananda, who went to Kashmir and succeeded in bringing Buddhism to Kashmir, after having subdued the Nagas by his supernatural powers.⁴ His journey to Kashmir has also been narrated in Kashmiri sources.⁵

It is reported that Madhyantika brought with him many bhiksus for settlement in Kashmir and he himself remained in the valley for nearly 20 years. He developed agriculture in Kashmir and also introduced saffron cultivation there for the first time.⁶ But Buddhism could not achieve much success. The Greeks who had over-run Persia in the 6th century B.C. conquered Gandhara some time after 518 B.C. Alexander marched his armies into India in the beginning of 326 B.C.⁷ He was welcomed by the king of Abhisaras, whose sway extended to some parts of Kashmir also. After his departure the Greeks established certain chiefships in the regions extending in the north west of India. Demetrious became the king of a vast territory, which included Kashmir also.⁸ Similarly, Menandar also exercised pressure on Kashmir. A large number of Indo-Greek coins including those of Menandar, describing him as the King of north-

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1. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, Stein., 1. pp. 93-94
 2. Buddhist records, S. Beal., pp. 150-57
 3. Mahavimsa XII. p. 3
 4. On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, T. Waters. Vol. I. p. 262
 5. Nilmatapurana.
 6. Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, Vol. I. p. 265
 7. Herodotus and Didorus
 8. Greeks in Bactaria and India, Taran., p. 155

western India, have been found in Kashmir and adjoining areas.¹

It was Menandar, who came under the influence of Buddhism. It goes to the credit of Nagasena, to have defeated Menandar in a religious discussion. This discussion was held at a place near Kashmir.² The *Milindapanha* is best source of information on the history of Buddhism in Kashmir. It informs that Menandar built the *Milinda-vihara* and joined the *Sangha* as a monk and finally attained arhathood.³ The *Milindapanha* was written in Kashmiri, but latter on was translated into Pali and Senhalese.⁴

Indo-Greeks appear to have accepted the doctrine of Buddhism. Kharoshti inscriptions found at Swat, Taxila and Lolab in Kashmir prove the existence of Buddhism during the period.⁵ These kings erected Stupas, constructed Viharas and installed images of the Lord Sakyamuni. Thus it is clear that Buddhism came to Kashmir long before Asoka.

According to the Kashmiri chronicles, it was "Shakiya-simha" who preached Buddhism in Kashmir, 150 years, prior to the advent of Naga-arjuna in Kashmir.⁶ In fact the Nagas believed in cooperative life and had their own communes; they did not like caste system of the Brahmins and hence embraced Buddhism.

Asoka of Kashmir :

Asoka Maurya of Magadha came to power in 269 B.C. His fame mainly rests on the position which he held as the great patron of Buddhism.⁷ His edicts have been found in

1. Handbook of the archaeological and Numismatic sections of the Sri Pratap Singh Museum, R.C. Kak
2. *Milindapnha*. Trans. Trenckner., pp. 82-83
3. *Ibid*, p. 420
4. Kashmir Shairi, Sahitya Academy. New Delhi
5. Kharoshti inscriptions were excavated at Khurhom in Lolab, Kashmir in 1962
6. *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Hassan Shah; *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Fauq
7. *Ancient India*, E.J. Rapson. Cambridge., p. 104

Shahbazgarhi and Mansehra, which formed a part of Gandhara in those days. It is contended that this Asoka sent missionaries to different lands, including Kashmir. It was during his reign that Mijhantika was deputed to Kashmir, which was under the rule of the Naga King, Aravala.¹ Nagas ruled over Kashmir before 1260 B.C.,² while Asoka of Kashmir started his reign in 1182 B.C. This has resulted in creating a confusion about the Asoka of Kashmir. Hence it appears that the Asoka of Kashmir is some different personality from the Asoka of Magadha. Kashmiri Asoka was the son of Sachinara and great-grandson of Sakuni, while the Indian Asoka was the son of Bindhusara. There is gap of 900 years between the two. Indian Asoka was the chief patron of Buddhism and he deputed missioneries to various countries, the Kashmiri Asoka patronised the Buddhist as well as the Saivist faiths. While edicts of the Indian Asoka contain detailed description of the countries, where Buddhist missionary activities were patronised by him, none of the edicts contain the name of Kashmir in it. Not a single inscription or edict of Asoka has been located in Kashmir, which is a mountainous country.

Raja Asoka came to power in Kashmir prior to 1 A.D. He conquered Kabur, Turkistan and some parts of India. He destroyed the Saiva and the Naga temples and forced people to accept "Jaina" faith. Accordingly, the valley was divided into many factions, some supporting the Saivists, the others "Jainism" and some, the new religion i.e. Buddhism which the king had adopted after meeting a Bhiksu. Raja Asoka, then took steps to do some good deeds. He deputed monks to Turkistan, Tiben and China.³

1. *Dul-va*, Vol. XI. pp. 684—690

Aravala is described as Apalala in Chinese sources

2. *The Hindu History of Kashmir*, H.H. Wilson, p. 144

3. *Mukamal Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Fauq., p. 99. Jainism has been confused with Buddhism

During his life-time Buddhism reached Ladakh and from that place travelled to Tibet and China. He built the new capital of Kashmir and gave it the name of Srinagari, which had ninety-six lakhs of houses, resplendent with wealth.¹ Raja Asoka built two Buddhist stupas at Hukalitar and Vethavutur, in Badgham and Anantnag. Vethavutur is regarded as a source of the river Jehlum in Kashmir. Buddhist relics, such as statues have been found at the old site of Srinagri, Pandrathan, and Huklitar. Some of the statues have been brought to the Government Museum, Srinagar. In the reign of Asoka, Kashmir was over-run by the Mleechhas, i.e. followers of Jainism, Buddhism, fire-worshipers, and Naga-worshipers. He is said to have permitted heretical beliefs to enter his realm from Tartar neighbours. Accordingly, he worshiped Siva and obtained a son for their expulsion.²

Nagaism and Buddhism :

Kashmir formed a part of Gandhara during the ancient period. The whole area from Anantnag to Peshawar is termed as Gandhara. Its capital was situated at Taxila. The Nagas inhabited this area. They were always at war with the Aryans. After some centuries, they became masters of the Sanskrit learning and produced famous scholars, important among those are Kapil, Patanjali, and Nagarjuna. Buddhists had to face strong opposition from the Nagas of Kashmir. Madhyantika succeeded in winning over the Nagas and they began to abandon the rites and ceremonies prescribed in the Nilmatapurana.³ Further, as they could not appreciate the system of casts, they adopted the doctrine of Buddhism, which taught universal brotherhood. They started to worship the image of Buddha and mixed their own ceremonies with it.⁴

1. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., I p. 104

2. The Hindu History of Kashmir, H.H. Wilson., Foot-notes p. 18-19

3. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, Stein., I. p. 178

4. Tarikh-i-Kashmir, Hassan Shah

Anti-Buddhist Jalauka :

Jalauka who came to the throne after the death of Asoka, has been mentioned as "the vanquisher of the Buddhists."¹ He was a rank communalist. He let loose a rain of terror on the Nagas, by storming their habitations and by rape of the Naga maidens.² At the instance of Avadhuta, he took a vow that he would follow only Saivism.³ He persecuted the Buddhists, and destroyed their viharas and stupas. He patronised Saivism and built Siva temples on the Buddhists sites. Jalauka could not even tolerate the sound of the Buddhist hymns on the pretext that it disturbed his sleep and he on this excuse, got demolished the Buddhist viharas. Persecution of the Buddhists could not subdue their spirits and they conspired to kill him. A Buddhist lady, Krtiya by name actually volunteered to do the job. She went to the king and asked him to have compassion for human beings. The king promised that, henceforth he will abstain from such acts.⁴ However, it is an admitted fact that Jalauka and his successors brought havoc to Buddhism in Kashmir.

Saivism and Buddhism :

The Brahmins are the worshippers of Siva, Vishnu and their Saktis. They worship Siva as God. Vasugupta founded Saivism in Kashmir. Buddhism had to face strong opposition from the hands of the Saivists. This resulted in bringing much hinderance to its progress. Due to these factors both the Buddhists and the Saivists intermingled and Buddha was termed as an avatara of Vishnu, with the result that separate entity of Buddhism vanished from the valley.

1. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., I. p. 112

2. Ibid, I. p. 111

3. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, I. p. 113

4. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., I. p. 140-44. also Samayamatrka. Ksemendra; Krtiyasarama-Vihara

Turushka Kings :

Yu-echi tribe rose to power in about 162 B.C. and drove out the foreigners who had occupied the borders of China. They lived in the Kansu province. But their success was short lived and their leader Chang-lun was defeated by Lao-Shang. Yu-echi tribe was vanquished and turned out of their homes about the year 177 B.C. They fled towards Gandhara and Kashmir. Latter they occupied Afghanistan and are known as Kushans.¹

Solomon's visit :

It has been mentioned that Sandiman or Solomon came to Kashmir by air and rested on the top of 'Larjeet' hill in Srinagar. This hill is known as Takhat-i-Sulaiman or the Solomon's throne uptill now. He arranged removal of hinderences placed in the normal flow of the river Jehlum near Baramulla and saved the valley from submerging under water. Soloman is supposed to have entrusted the Government of the valley to the three Trushka princes, Hushka, Jushka and Kanishka.²

Kushanas :

With the coming of the Kushanas, Buddhism received a tremendous support. There is no denying the fact that during their rule, Buddhists enjoyed royal patronage. Coins of Hushka or Huviskha and Kanishka have been located in Kashmir.³ There is no such evidence in respect of Jushka, except that he built Juskpura (Zukur) a large village near Srinagar. To Hushka, the building of Husuhkpura (Ushkur) is attributed. Kanishka is supposed to have founded Kanishkapur, now known as Kanispor. They built many Buddhist temples. Naga-arjuna, who lived in the 'wood of the six saints', now known as

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1. Encyclopedia Britanica, XVIII. also, Le Rois Indo-Scythe, Drouin
 2. Mukamal Tarikh-i-Kashmir, Fauq., 109. also Ratnakara
 3. Hand Book S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar, pp. 131-32, 156

Harwan, has been termed as Bodhisatva.¹ Naga-arjuna was a person of great celebrity, for it was he who denominated the Saka era, now in vogue in India.² Distinguished scholars of the period were Katyayaniputra, Asvaghosa, Vasubandu, Jinbandhu, Dharmarta, Singhabhadra and Suryadeva.

1. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, I. p. 173

2. The Hindu History of Kashmir, H.H. Wilson., p. 112



Spread of Buddhism

“You strive for the world’s sake with mind free from attachments.
How wonderful is the blessed-Buddha-nature of the Buddhas.”

Satapancasathanama-Buddha-Stotra.

Soon after the passing away of Buddha, his followers convened a council at Rajagriha in a cave, with the purpose of codifying the canon. This council drew up the Tripitaka. A century or so later, differences arose between the two factions of the Buddhists. One party wanted to relax the rules of discipline, while the other was totally against modernising the canon. Accordingly to settle these differences of opinion, a council was convened at Vaishali.¹ It was attended to by nearly 700 monks. Majority of the delegates refused to bring about any change, with the result that the rebels formed themselves into a new sect. They came to be known as the Mahasanghikas. The Sangha was split into 18 sects and the conservatives came to be known as Sthaviras or Theravadins. The Sangha which

1. Ancient India, Gokhale, B.G., p. 159
The Life of Buddha, Thomas., p. 170

had played an important role in the spread of Buddhism by its united efforts, fell into pieces and became weak.

Third Council :

Asoka, the son of Bindusara reigned over the Maurya empire during the 3rd century B.C. During his reign Buddhism assumed the position of an official religion. His missionary zeal, his deputations to foreign lands and his rock edicts, viharas and stupas are well known. In order to bring unity in the Buddhist Church, he convened a council of the Buddhist luminaries.¹ As the council had been convened under royal auspices, nearly 30 thousand arhats, bikhsus and other Buddhists reached the venue of the council.² The conservatives were led by Moggaliputra Tissa and the free-thinkers were led by Mahadeva. We learn from the Chinese sources that Asoka took the side of the orthodox Theravadins. Being led to believe that Asoka would drown them into the river Ganges, the free-thinkers; Sarvastivadins fled to Kashmir to take refuge in the valleys and hills.³ The statement of Hiuen Tsiang that Asoka built 500 monasteries and gave up all Kashmir to them and similar statements made by Taranatha may mean that Asoka tried his best to appease the rebels and bring them to the fold of Sangha but having failed, he gave up Kashmir for good. Kashmir delegation having fled from the council, the Theravadins felt free to compile Kathavastu. The Sarvastivadins of Kashmir accelerated their activities and gave a definite shape to their reformist ideas, paving way for Mahayana.⁴

Kanishka :

Kanishka succeeded to the kingdom of Kashmir 'in the

1. Ancient India, B.C. Gokhale., p. 159
2. Legende de l'Empereur, Przyluski., pp. 101—107
3. On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, Watters., I. pp. 267—69
4. Divya, p. 44.

four hundredth year after the Nirvana', according to Hiuen Tsiang. Further researches on numismatic sources have revealed that he ruled between 10 A.D. and 40 A.D.¹. It was Kanishka, who restored Buddhism in his kingdom by giving it his patronage. As such his period is most important for the history of Buddhism in Kashmir, Gandhara and Central Asia. He built many viharas, stupas, and other religious buildings. Further, lavish grants were made in favour of the monks.² It was Kanishka, who struck coins with the name of Boddo (Buddha).³

Fourth Council :

According to the Buddhist tradition, Kanishka held the fourth Buddhist Council in Kashmir.⁴ He was advised by Parsva to summon all the monks for collection of sacred texts, and to prepare commentaries on the Sutra, the Vinaya and the Abhidharma. This council was held at Kuvana in Kashmir.⁵ It has been termed as Kien-tho-lo in the Chinese geography. Besides large audience, this council was attended to by 500 Arhats, 500 Bodhisattvas and 500 Panditas.⁶ Asvaghosa, the celebrated author of the Buddhacarita, the Saundrananda and the Sariputraprakarma, attended this council. It goes to the credit of this council that commentaries on all the Buddhist texts were compiled into two treatises known as Upadesa-sastras and Vibhasa-sastras.⁷ The latter is known as Kas-mir-shi in Chinese.⁸ It also goes to the credit of this council that for the first time in the

1. A note on Kalhanas Rajatarangini, R.C. Dutta—Calcutta Review
2. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. II. pp. 29, 137, 145, 155, 176
3. Kanishka's gold coin, British Museum. London, also Copper coin G.M. Museum, Srinagar
4. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, Trans. Stein. Vol. I. p. 76
5. Materialien Zur Kunde des Buddhismus, M. Walleser., Trans. Obermiller. p. 97
6. Taranatha, Trans. Schiefner. also Chos-hbyung. History of Buddhism. Bu-ston Trans. Obermiller., p. 96—97
7. Hiuen Tsiang's Travels in India
8. T'oung Pao, B. Laufer., Vol. V. pp. 276—81

history of Buddhism, freedom of thought and expression was recognised and it was declared that the texts of all the 18 Schools of thought in Buddhism were correct, for all of them contained the word of the Master.¹ This council is important in this respect also because it marks a new epoch in the history of Buddhism. Henceforth Kashmir became the headquarters of the Sarvastivadin school of Buddhism. These doctrines penetrated into Kabul, Qandhar, Central Asia and Tibet. Kanishka patronised such activities and even made a gift of Kashmir to the Sangha.² It has further been given by the Chinese sources that the final decisions of the council were engraved on copper plates and deposited in a stupa, under orders of the king.³ Excavations done at Harwan, Ushkur and Ahan have revealed existence of Buddhist relics but no traces of these copper plates have been found and this problem still engages attention of scholars throughout the world.⁴

The three Pitakas, which ran into 300,000 verses, were engraved on copper plates and deposited in a vihara specially constructed for this purpose⁵. This precious find has not been unearthed so far. Some clues are available now on this most important issue. Probably the site is at Buddhabal in Kralwan Kashmir.

Naga-arjuna of Kashmir :

Naga-arjuna is highly spoken of in the Buddhist literature. He is titled as Budhisattva as also "the sole lord of the land."⁶ He is mentioned to have defeated the Saivists in religious discussions.⁷ He lived at Sadarhadvana

1. Chos. hlung Bu-ston, Trans. E. Obemiller., p. 97

2. Hiuen Tsiang's Travels in India, Trans. Watters

3. Ibid.

4. Excavations at Harwan were done by R.C. Kak; at Ushur by Daya Ram Sahni and at Ahan by F.M. Hassnain

5. Buddhism in Pakistan, p. 12

6. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., Trans. Stein, Vol. I. p. 173

7. Ibid. p. 178

in Kashmir, which is known as Harwan these days.¹ It was due to his knowledge that the Buddhists of Kashmir maintained their ascendancy over other acharyas.² He has been also called the Minister in the court of Chirayapur. He is also said to have denominated the Saka era.³ Naga-arjuna's name has been very closely associated with the Mahayana and Kashmir. History records that the Buddhists suffered untold miseries during the reign of Abhimanyu, who gave royal patronage to Saivism. Buddhists were forced either to renounce their religion or face annihilation. Under such circumstances, many a Buddhists ran away towards the plains.⁴ Naga-arjuna had to flee from Kashmir and reached South India.⁵ In this way his name began to be associated with Nagarjunakunda in the South. However Naga-arjuna's spring in the village Supun, in Batho, near the Hirapura hill in Shopiyan, Kashmir, is known upto this day.⁶ Naga-arjuna whose name is now being associated with Naga-arjunakunda in the South was a disciple of Sarha (8th century A.D.).⁷ But the Naga-arjuna of Kashmir lived during the Kushan period and was a Saivist during his early youth, for he is said to have composed Chitta-Santosha and Parmachana and both these embody Saivist ideals.⁸ Naga-arjuna has been a student of Satya-Simha, who had propagated Buddhism in Kashmir, 150 years before the Kushans.⁹

Mahayan and Tantrism :

Buddhism split into two distinct schools of thought after

1. Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1895. p. 2
2. The Hindu History of Kashmir, H.H. Wilson., p. 111
3. Ibid. p. 112
4. Mukamal Tarikh-i-Kashmir, Fauq., p. 114
5. Taranatha's Buddhism, Trans. Schiefner. pp. 84—85
6. Tarikh-i-Hassan (Persian) Vol. I. p. 130
7. Buddhism in Orissa, N.K. Sahu., p. 163
8. Sharda-Peetha Research Series
9. Tarikh-i-Hassan, Vol. II. p. 43

the fourth Buddhist Council. In fact the process of division had started soon after the passing away of Buddha. Now all the sub-sects formed themselves into two clear divisions with clear cut philosophies. The orthodox adhered to the Pali texts and came to be known as the Hinanyanists. Those who developed the Buddhist canon in Sanskrit came to be known as the Mahayanists. While the Hinayana school stuck to the original canon, the Mahayana made it broad based so as to bring in the Vedic gods also into Buddhism in a disguise.¹ This new orientation of religion was brought about by the Kashmiri scholars. They gave a new concept about the later Buddhisattvas needed for salvation of future generations. Hindu gods and goddesses found their way into the Buddhist pantheon, and worship of Buddha among the Saivists became necessary.² Similarly, the Mantrayana concepts began to creep into the Mahayana. Such mixed mythological and metaphysical concept and rituals became popular in Kashmir, Central Asia, Tibet, Nepal, China and Mangolia. The Mantrayana is generally known by the name of Tantrism. But it is evident that the Mahayana in the course of time gave birth to various concepts such as the Mantrayana and Pramitayana. Net result, was the development of various tantaras. In this development, Kashmir played an important part by production of many tantaras, such as the Brhanila-tantram, the Nirvana-tantra, and other works on the Kalachakra. During the reign of Lalitaditya (724-761), tantra was practised in Kashmir.³ Four important seats of Tantrayana were, Uddiyana, Purnagiri, Kamaksa and Sirihatta.⁴ Uddiyana has been mentioned as Udabanda in the Kashmir chronicles.⁵ Hiuen Tsiang mentions this

1. Indian Philosophy. Radhakrishnan. p. 598

2. Hinduism and Buddhism, Elliot., pp. 118, 391

3. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., Trans. Stein, IV. p. 246

4. Journal Royal Asiatic Society, Bengal Vol. XIV. NI. 1948

5. Rajatarangini. Kalhana, V, pp. 153, 232. VII. p. 1081. Jonaraja. p. 372

place as U-to-kia-han-cha and on the banks of the river Indus.¹ It had remained the capital of the Sahi kings for centuries. Uddiyana formed a part of Kashmira-Gandhara and lies on the north-west of the Kashmir valley between Daradadesa and Suvastu river, spread on bothsides of the river Indus.

1. Si-yu-ki, I. p. 114

IV

Persecution

"All that is born, brought into being, and put together carries within itself the seeds of dissolution."

Buddha to Ananda

Process :

It was Nara, who started the process which resulted in the extinction of Buddhism from Kashmir. He got burnt the Buddhist viharas of Kashmir and uprooted the Buddhist population by confiscating their lands and bestowing them to the Brahmins.¹ What happened in Kashmir was a part of similar process of elimination of the Buddhists in the country.² In the struggle between Brahminism and Buddhism, the former was victorious. Under such circumstances, extinction of Buddhism from Kashmir was a question of time.

Meghavahana :

Meghavahana who came to the throne of Kashmir in

1. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., Trans. Stein, I.P. 200

2. A note on Kalhana's Rajatarangini., R.C. Dutt., Calcutta Review, 1880

438 A.D. was a Buddhist. He tried to revive the dying faith. He and his queens built many viharas for the benefit of foreign bikhsus.¹ The main viharas were built at Vicharnag, Narvor and Khadanyar in Kashmir. Famous among these was Amritabahvana, which was got built by the queen Amritaprabha. Ou-kong has mentioned this vihara by the name of Ngo-mi-to-po-wan.² This place is known as Antbavan now and lies in the vicinity of Vicharnag, Srinagar. As the queen was a Ladakhi lady and her guru was also a Stunpa from Ladakh, she dedicated this vihara to Amitayu, the river of long life.³ It further transpires that the Mahayana-tantrikism had swayed both Ladakh and Kashmir during that period.

Pravarasena :

Pravarasena came to power during the late part of the 6th century. He had to repulse attacks of Mummuni, the Muslim chief from Central Asia.⁴ He built the city of Pravarasenanager with shrines of five Goddesses. His uncle Jayendra established the famous vihara known as Jayendra-vihara. It housed the biggest statue of Buddha.⁵ This vihara was visited by Hiuen Tsiang during his stay in Kashmir and he mentioned it by the name of Che-ye-in-to-lo.⁶ This vihara was burnt down by Ksemagupta, who melted down the colossal statue for his new temple dedicated to Siva.⁷

Durlabhavardhana :

Durlabhavardhana came to power in 598 A.D. He is

1. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., Trans. Stein, II. pp. 9-14
2. Notes on Ou-kong, Stein, see Rajatarangini, Vol. II. p. 457
3. Her guru came from Loh (Ladakh), who also built a vihara named Lo-stupa for his countrymen, Kalhan, III. p. 10
4. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., Trans. Stein, III. p. 332
5. Ibid, II. p. 355
6. The life of Hiuen Tsiang, S. Hwui Li., p. 69
7. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., Trans. Stein, VI. p. 171

known as Tu-lo-pa in the Chinese annals. Hieuen Tsiang visited Kashmir during his reign and remained here between 631-633 A.D. His kingdom included Taxila, Hazara, Rajauri and Poonch, besides Kashmir. It was Chandrapida who applied in 713 A.D. to the Chinese Emperor for aid against the Arabs.¹ Accordingly, influence of the Chinese increased in Ladakh, Baltistan and Dardistan. The next ruler of Kashmir, Lalitaditya was a powerful king, who ruled over a vast empire, which included some parts of Central Asia also. He established diplomatic relations with the rulers of the T'ang-dynasty.² He built temples and viharas in honour of Vishnu, Siva and Buddha. In his new capital at Paraspura, he built a large imperial vihara known as the Rajavihara, in which he got installed a colossal statue of Buddha.³ Sarvajnamitra, the author of Sragdharastotra lived in it. Paraspura is situated nearly 3 miles south west of Shadipur, in Baramulla District, Kashmir. The ruins of Paraspura are scattered on a large plateau. Shankaravarman destroyed this capital and its temples and viharas, during his reign.⁴

Avantivarman :

With Avantivarman, who came to power in 855 A.D., Vaishnavism and Shaktism got prominence in Kashmir.⁵ He patronised Saivism, which was propounded by Vasugupta, the author of Sivasutras.⁶ Henceforth the masses were attracted towards Saivism. Now was the time to completely wipe out the Buddhist faith from Kashmir. Shankaravarman, the next ruler either confiscated lands and viharas or plundered these shrines. During the

1. *Memoires relatifs Asie*, Klaproth, II. p. 275

2. *Rajatarangini*, Kalhana, Stein., Note IV. p. 126

3. *Rajatarangini*, Kalhana, Stein., IV. p. 200

4. *Ibid*, VII. pp. 1093-1098

5. A note on Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, R.C. Dutt., *Calcutta Review*-1880

6. *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Hassan Shah., p. 8

rule of Ksemagupta, the remaining viharas were either burnt or appropriated. He burnt the most magnificent vihara of Jayendra.¹ Out of the burned material, he built a Siva temple.²

The only remanent of the Buddhist literature in Kashmir is Avdhana-kalpalata by Ksemendra (11th century). This manuscript is in Tibetan as well as in Devnagri scripts.³ In order to bring communal harmony between the Buddhists and the Saivists, Ksemendra wrote Dash-avatacharita.

Harsha (1089-1101 A.D.) broke down the ascendancy of the Brahmins and behaved as a non partisan in religious affairs; rather he utilised temple property for imperial purposes. He did not object to intellectual pursuits and allowed freedom to all including the Muslims. What could not be accomplished by the Brahmins for him was accomplished by the Muslims.⁴ Some of the distinguished Buddhist scholars of his time were Sakyamati, Silabhadra, and Yasomitra.⁵ Jayasimha (1128-1154 A.D.) tried to revive the Buddhist faith but he could not succeed. The last Buddhist king of Kashmir, who had migrated from Ladakh to wrestle the throne of Kashmir adopted Islam as his faith and thus became the first Muslim king of Kashmir in 1320 A.D.⁶

Dardistan :

After its extinction from Kashmir, Buddhism found its asylum in Dardistan, know as Daraddesa.⁷ This territory extended from Chitral to Gurais on the river Krishenganga.

1. History of Kashmir, P.N.K. Bamzai., p. 133
2. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, Trans. Stein., VI. pp. 172-173
3. Research manuscript Library, Srinagar
4. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., Trans. Stein. VII. p. 1098
5. Taranatha, Schiefner., p. 205
6. Rajatarangini, Jonaraja., S. 166-193
7. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, Trans. Stein., I. p. 93

This was ruled over by the Sahi princes, which was a branch of the Sahis of Kabul and the Punjab.¹ The Sahi princes were strong supporters of Buddhism and provided the needed refuge to the Kashmiri Buddhists, who had to flee from the valley, in order to save themselves from persecution during the period following 950 A.D. Queen Didda was a Sahi princess, who became the ruler of Kashmir in 980 A.D.² Gilgit was the chief centre of Buddhist learning during the period. A large number of manuscripts, written in the 6th century A.D. were found there.³ Buddhist stupas have been located in Gilgit, Yasin and areas around it.⁴

Gilgit Buddhist Manuscripts :

In 1931, a Buddhist Library containing more than 200 manuscripts of the 6th century A.D. was discovered at Gilgit. This was perhaps the first find of original works on Buddhism in India and some of the works were known only by their Tibetan or Chinese translations. The Orientalists' Congress which met at Baroda expressed its unanimous desire that this notable collection should be catalogued, analysed and published. These manuscripts deal with 6 different schools of the Mahayana. Some contain Jataka tales and some deal with the Kalachakra. The alphabet is a mixture of the Tibetan, the Brahmi and the Kashmiri Sarda, of the 5th century A.D. The language, though based on Sanskrit is not classical Sanskrit but Prakirit and local. The numbering of leaves is Roman from 1 to 3 and after that the leaves have true units. Hundred is given at the top. Below hundred come tens. The leaves are in the Talapatra form and can be turned over topwise.⁵

1. Dynastic History of Northern India, Ray., I. Ch. II

2. A note on Kalhana's Rajatarangini, R.C. Dutt., Calcutta review. 1880

3. The Statesman, July 24, 1931

4. Census Report, 1931. p. 321

5. Kashmir text and Studies, Research and Publications Department, Srinagar—Kashmir

Colophon in the manuscripts throws light on a hitherto unknown line of rulers in Daradistan, Chitral and Swat, some time before the 6th century A.D. The rulers mentioned are Deva, Lalleya and Bhima of the Sahi dynasty. Only a few of the manuscripts have been published so far and the rest are preserved in the National Archives of India. The published works are as under :—

Bhaisajyaguru-sutram

Samadhiraja

Mulasarvastivada Vinaya Pitaka

V

Che-yen and Hiuen Tsiang

“Do not sit at home, do not go to the forest, but recognise mind where-ever you are.”

Saraha Dohakosa. V. 103

THE first monk, who came to Kashmir for studies was Buddhadana from Central Asia. He visited Kashmir prior to his going to China.¹ Che-yen was perhaps the first Chinese Buddhist, who came to Kashmir in the 5th century A.D. He was followed by Che-mong, who came to Kashmir via Dardistan. Another monk, who is known as Fa-yong studied in Kashmir for some time. He adopted the new name of Dharmakara.²

Hiuen Tsiang :

In 631 A.D. the world famous Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsiang came to Kashmir through the Uri route. He spent the first night at Ushkar. He was received by the

1. Indo-Chinese relations. Chou Hsiang-Kuang

2. Ibid

representative of the king.¹ After a few days, he was escorted to the capital, where he was received by the king of Kashmir, in person, who gave him a royal reception. Both he and the king were mounted on elephants and the procession was followed by officers and dignatories. A large number of people came to welcome the royal guest. They carried banners and standards in their hands. Flowers were showered upon Hiuen Tsiang and the Emperor.²

Hiuen Tsiang, on arrival to the capital was lodged in the famous vihara known as Jayendra vihara.³ He was provided with all facilities by the King, who placed 20 copyists at his disposal. They did the copying work for Hiuen Tsiang. Besides this the King placed 5 attendants at his disposal.⁴ He remained in Kashmir for nearly 2 years and copied original texts. Hiuen Tsiang has given valuable information about the large number of Buddhist monasteries existing at that time in Kashmir. He says that there are hundred viharas in the kingdom. He further informs that in a stupa 2 miles towards the north of Srinagar, he found a tooth of the Buddha, as a sacred relic, which was sought by the King Harsha for worship. He mentions another stupa near Khanmoh, where he found a standing statue of Avalokiteshvara Buddhisattva.

Hiuen Tsiang has described other stupas. One such stupa contained relics of an arhat and it was situated in Zabervan, near the famous moghal spring known as Chismashahi. Its ruins are known as Pari Mahal or the "place of the fairies" at present. It was 50 feet high above the ground. Another chinese scholar, who remained in Kashmir for a year, as the guest of the king, was Suan-hui.

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1. Unfortunately Hiuen Tsiang has not mentioned the name of the king of Kashmir. He may be Durlabhavardhana
 2. Life of Hiuen Tsiang, Trans. Beal., pp. 68. sqq
 3. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, Trans. Stein., III. p. 355
 4. Watters, On Yuan Chwang, pp. 258 sqq

He studied Buddhist texts under the famous Kashmiri teacher, Bhadanta.

Hiuen Tsiang stayed for 15 years studying in various monasteries of Kashmir, Sialkot, Kanauj and Nalanda. He carried 657 Mahayana and Hinayana texts and Sutras to China.

Ou-Kong :

Another Chinese scholar, who visited Kashmir was Ou-Kong. He is also known as Dharmadhatu. He reached Kashmir in 759 A.D.¹ During his 4 years stay in the valley, he studied the Buddhist texts in Sanskrit. He learnt the Vinayas in seven sections from three Kashmiri teachers. He has mentioned about the existence of more than 300 viharas, stupas and other relics in Kashmir during his stay.² He refers to the following viharas in details :—

Moung-ti Vihara

Amitabhavana

Ananga

Nao-ye-le

Je-ji

Ye-li-te-le

Ko-toen³

Ou-Kong has given correct geographical description of Kashmir. He has mentioned three roads leading to Kashmir, from Po-lin, Toufan and Kien-to-lo.⁴

In the Moung-ti vihara or Mundi-vihara, he learnt the Silas and studied the Vinayas of the Mulasarvasivadins. Another Chinese monk, Hiuan-chao accompanied a Kashmiri scholar back to Kashmir for study.

1. Stein, *Rajatarangini*, Vo. II. p. 357

2. L'Itineraie d'Ou-Kong, *Journal Asiat.*, 1895. VI. p. 341

3. *Ibid*, p. 354

4. *Ibid*, p. 356

Nrong :

Similarly from Tibet many Tibetan scholars visited Kashmir for higher studies. Nrong remained in Kashmir for nearly 17 years and studied the Buddhist texts at the famous viharas in Kashmir. Another Tibetan scholar, Nema-gras-gias remained in Kashmir for 23 years. Rin-chen-song-pa, also studied in Kashmir for many years and then visited Central India.¹

1. Buddhist Himalayas, David Snellgrove., p. 180.

VI

Buddhism in Dardistan and Ladakh

“I grant you, monks, this permission. Confer henceforth, in the different regions and the different countries. . . .”

Ananttalakshana Sutta

In ancient days, Kashmir valley was confined to its geographical limits but during the Kushana period, Kashmir established direct connections with other regions of Gandhara. Kashmir became a centre for the Buddhist knowledge and played an important role in diffusing this knowledge in Qandhar, Kabul, Central Asia and China.

Buddhism in Gandhara :

Buddhism had reached Gandhara during the reign of Asoka. During the early years of Kushana rulers, it has obtained a strong hold in Darda country and Ladakh. Fa-hien entered India in 399 A.D. from the north-western routes of Dardadessa.¹ He visited Gilgit and found that Buddhism flourished in the Bhauttadesa and the

1. India and China, P.C. Bagchi., pp. 68-74

Dardadesa.¹ Then he crossed the Indus at Peshawar and then to Mathura.² Thus it appears that Buddhism had entered Ladakh and Baltistan prior to the 4th century A.D. It might have been brought there by the emigrants from Dardistan, Kulu and Tibet. From ancient times, Ladakh had been a part of Tibet. That is the reason the history of both Ladakh and Tibet starts with the advent of the Bon religion and its transformation to the Buddhist religion. Bon faith existed in Tibet, Central Asia, Mangolia and even in Dardistan from ancient times. Tibet had to import Bon priests from Gilgit and Kashmir.³ The mixture of Bonism and Buddhism gave rise to Lamaism, which is prevalent in Tibet and Ladakh today.

Ladakh :

Ladakh is called La-dwag in Tibet. It has also been known as Mar-yul or the lowland and Kha-chum-pa or the snow land. Fa-Hien mentioned it as Kia-Chha and Hiuen Tsiang denoted it as Ma-lo-oho. Ladakh is at a very high altitude and its height ranges between 9 to 18 thousand feet above the sea level. The whole of Ladakh is covered with parallel mountain ranges i.e. the Himalayan range, the Mustagh range and the Kuen-hun range. Thus a number of valleys have been created, principal among these is the river Indus valley.

Ladakhi Buddhism :

King Gna-khri-btsan-po came to power in Ladakh in 50 B.C.⁴ During the reign of Sron-btsan-sgam-po (600-50 A.D.) 16 students were deputed to Kashmir to learn the new

1. Bhauttadesa denotes Baltistan and Ladakh
2. History of India, D. Prasad., p. 106
3. Religion of Tibet, Helmut Hoffmann., p. 23
4. Rgyal-rabs, Trans. Schlagintweit., p. 14.

script to be used for the Tibetan. Accordingly, the new script was based on Sarda script, then prevalent in Kashmir. Simhandanda taught them this script. Tabuta and Ganuta were also invited to Tibet.¹ Thus Buddhism was introduced in Ladakh and Tibet. It was during this period that the statue of Buddha was installed at Lhasa. The work of translation of the Buddhist texts was started by Dharma-kirti and others.

Tibetan invasion of Gilgit :

In 678 A.D. the Chinese reconquered Turkistan. They were defeated. Their attack on Tibet was repulsed by the Tibetans.² Muktapida of Kashmir formed a joint alliance with the Chinese against the Tibetans.³ Both the Chinese and the Tibetans fought for possession of Gilgit. China was ruled by the Emperor Hiuen Tsiang (713-755 A.D.) and he was for acquisition of Gilgit and Dardadessa took place between the years 736-747 A.D. Ananta of Kashmir was invited to Tibet, some time after the death of the Chinese Emperor, to teach the Buddhist texts. After some time, Padma-sambhava was invited from Udiyana. This battle for Gilgit resulted in the destruction of the Buddhist relics in Chitral and Udiyana.⁴

Padmasambhava :

Padmasambhava is regarded as the originator of Red sect in Tibet, Ladakh and Gilgit. He propounded the theory of realizing Nirvana through knowing the mind. His influence did not rest here but reached as far as Mangolia. He is credited to have been the author of 10 treatises relating to the Vinaya, Mantrayana and

1. Antiquities of Indian Tibet, A.H. Francke., pp. 82-83

2. Antiquities of Indian Tibet, A.H. Francke., p. 85

3. Rajatarangini, Kalhana. Stein., IV. p. 126. Note by Stein

4. Les Bouddhistes Kashmiriens au Moyen Age, Jean Naudou., p. 49

Hevajratantra.¹ At his instance the King, built some viharas at Lhasa and other places.

Baltistan :

Baltistan is a part of the Indus Valley bounded by the Karakoram mountains on the north, by the Himalayas on the south, by Ladakh on the east and by Dardistan on the west. Buddhist activities did not confine to Ladakh only but to Baltistan also. She had embraced Buddhism during the period it spread in Ladakh and Dardistan. As the country had been under the Tibetans, tantric Buddhism got prevalent there. A new monastery was built at Skardu under orders of the king, Sad-na-legs.²

Ral-pa-can :

Ral-pa-can became the ruler of Tibet in 804 A.D. Ladakh, Baltistan, Dardistan, Chamba and Mandi were under him. The first history of Tibet was written during his reign.³ Persecution of the Buddhists in Tibet started with the King Dar-ma-dbyig-dur-btsan (816-842 A.D.). He closed the Buddhists monasteries and buried their scriptures in the earth. A revolution occurred in Tibet which resulted in its disintegration. Ladakh and other countries held by the Tibetans became free and converted themselves into independent principalities.⁴ Later, the whole of Ladakh was divided into 3 kingdoms under the 3 sons of the Ladakhi King.

Ladakh remained as a part of the ancient empire of Tibet for many centuries and as such was known as western Tibet. It remained a part of Tibet until the 10th century A.D., when it separated from Tibet and assumed an

1. Ibid., p. 93

2. Antiquities of Indian Tibet, A.H. Francke., II. p. 89

3. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1881. p. 230

4. Antiquities of Indian Tibet, A.H. Francke., II. p. 93

independent position. From ancient times it has cultural and religious ties with Tibet. and as such its history has remained mingled with Tibet. After separation from Tibet, it still continued to look to Tibet for spiritual guidance.

Lha-chen-Spal-gyi-gon :

Lha-chen-spal-gyi-gon, became the ruler of Ladakh Zanskar and Spiti 990 A.D.¹ In 1050 A.D. Khariy, deputed Losava to Kashmir to learn the Buddhist scriptures. After his studies in Kashmir and India, he returned to Ladakh and spent his whole life in the propagation of the faith. He was instrumental in construction of numerous monasteries and chortans in Ladakh. Some of the gumpas built by him still exist in Leh, Bas-go and Purig.² Earlier gumpas were repaired and renovated.

Invasion on Tibet :

Mirza Hyder Dughlat led an attack on Dardistan and occupied it in 1556 A.D. Sultan Sayed Khan, the Turkuman deputed Mirza Hyder with a large army to conquer Tibet. This event occurred in 1531-1532 A.D. He led an attack on Nubra and its chief was defeated and killed. Then he led an attack on proper Ladakh, but he suffered reverses.³ In the meanwhile, he received reinforcements. He now turned towards Baltistan, and its ruler, Behram-Cho submitted. After making necessary arrangements, his army marched towards Kashmir, through the mountain pass Zoji-la. After having subdued Kashmir, he alongwith his army went to Ladakh and then proceeded towards Tibet. He could not enter proper Tibet, because his horses and soldiers had died. He returned to Ladakh and then

1. Tarikh-i-Jammu. Hashmat-ullah Khan., p. 233

2. Mhatmiya Lamayuru Monastery

3. Tarikh-i-Jammu, Hashmat-ullah Khan., p. 246

went to Badakshan, having failed to have conquered Tibet or Ladakh.

Tsai-wang-rnam-rgyal :

Tsai-wang-rnam-rgyal became the King of Ladakh in 1532 A.D. He built a big palace at Leh. He also built La-Khang monastery, in which he installed a colossal statue of Buddha. La-Khang exists upto this time. It is highly decorated and all the walls contained beautiful frescoes. The King was a great conqueror and he extended his kingdom upto Lhasa. His kingdom extended right up to the borders of Lhasa on one side and Shigar in Baltistan on the other. He even attempted to wage war against the Turkamans of the Central Asia, but his idea could not materialise.¹ Sen-ge-rnam-rgyal ascended the throne of Ladakh in 1610 A.D. He patronised religious activities in his kingdom. He invited Stk-sang-rasa-pa for propagation of Buddhism in Ladakh. Stk-sang-rasa-pa was a great scholar who had studied in various monasteries of India as well as of Kashmir. His work on 'Sambhala' is well known and it gives description of the heavenly land called 'Sambhala'.

Sen-ge-rnam-rgyal built the gumpas of Hemis, Chemri, Hanli and Tashi-kong, and made grants of lands for their maintenance. His Queen got made golden statues of the Buddha. Further under her orders five volumes of Cham-choos-vinaya were prepared. After separation from Tibet, Ladakh and Baltistan continued to adhere to the red and the yellow schools of thought. In 1203 A.D. Tibet was conquered by Chengiz Khan but it did not produce much effect on Ladakh. In the beginning of the 13th century, Avalokitesvara was introduced in the Ladakhi texts.² The Bkabhgyur was received by the Mongols in 1310 A.D.

1. Tarikh-i-Jammu, Hashmat-ullah Khan., p. 290

2. Antiquities of Indian Tibet, A.H. Francke., II. p. 98

It was during this period that the prince Richin came as a refugee to Kashmir and became the King of the valley in 1320 A.D.¹ Red sect got patronage of the King Lha-chen-grags-hbum (1400-1440 A.D.). He built the Red monastery on a hill near Leh and introduced the Statue of Maitreya in it. He also got copied a few Buddhist scriptures. The Turks attacked Ladakh in 1532 A.D.

Mughal Occupation :

After occupation of Kashmir by the Mughals, they tried to conquer Ladakh. An attempt made by Jahangir failed. It was during the reign of Shahjahan that the Mughals defeated the Ladakhis. Henceforth Ladakh became a part of the Mughal empire in India. The Ladakhi King agreed to pay homage to the Mughal ruler and keep one of his sons as hostage at Kashmir. During the beginning of the 19th century, Ladakh and Baltistan fought each other. In 1834, Zorawar Singh led an attack on Ladakh. After his defeat, the Ladakhi King submitted and Ladakh was occupied by the Dogras. Ladakhis revolted and hence the King was deposed and Ladakh was taken over by the Dogras.

Red and Yellow Orders :

In Ladakh, the Buddhist Lamas belong to two major orders: the Dge-idan-pa (Yellow) order and the Sa-skyapa (Red) order. Dge-idan-pa order has under its control the monasteries of Skara, Tiksay, Sankar, Spittuk, Likir, Rizong and many small ones. Every house and human being is attached with one or the other monastery. The reformed order of the doctrines was introduced by Tsonkha-pa. They are 'Yellow' Lamas, but wear red dress with the exception that their caps and scraps are yellow. Sa-skyapa order is represented by Mah-spro monastery at

1. Rajatarangini, Jonaraja, Trans. Srikanth Koul., pp. 67-70

Hemis, which belongs to the Red Lamas. They wear red dress as well as red caps and red scraps round their waists. In olden days, every family had to give up one or two sons to the monastery to be made a Lama. He studies upto the age of 15 in the village monastery and then is sent to Lhasa for higher studies. After return he attends to his duties as a village priest. The number 108 is a sacred number with the Ladakhis. 108 is also the number of beads in the ordinary rosary of the Lamas. The kings of Ladakh have built a row of low walls, not more than 2 or 3 feet wide, called Chortans, number whereof does not exceed 108. Such Chortans are found in deserts. The Ston-phrag-brgya-pa is a famous treatise on the Mahayana. The Vinaya (discipline), the Sutra (doctrine), and the Abhidharma (philosophy), in fact contains the whole Mahayana literature as well as the Tantarass. These were collected and given the official name of Ka-gyur (Kanjur). Lha-chen-dnos-grup (1290-1340 A.D.) got it copied for use in the monasteries.¹

Gumpas, Chortans and Manis :

The whole of Ladakh is dotted with monasteries, known as gumpas, chortans and mani walls. There are 16 main gumpas, besides smaller monasteries in every village. Most important monasteries are Hemis, Nimaun, Skara, Spittuk, Tiksay, Phiong, Stagna, Langushta, Saspol, Rizong, Chimre, Mathoo, Sakti, Likir and Sankar. There are about 15,000 Lamas and 50 Chomos in Ladakh.²

Likir Gumpa is a monastery in the Likir village situated on the route between Basgo to Nurla. It was built during the reign of Lha-chen-rgyal-pa (1050-1080 A.D.). He collected a few hundred Lamas and got them settled in this monastery. Lha-chen-grags-hbum-ide (1400, A.D.), built

1. Tarikh-i-Jammu, Hasmat-ullah Khan., p. 236

2. Chomo means a nun

a monastery on the Rnam-rgyal-rtse-mo hill at Leh, in which he installed the colossal statue of the Maitreya Buddha, along with two statues of Manjugosha and Vajrapani. The statue of Maitreya Buddha reaches the ceiling of the first storey. The other two statues are not available now.

Hemis is a beautiful village situated on the Ladakh-Tibet road, 22 miles from Leh. Here we have the most famous monastery of the red order. Every year a fair is held at Hemis, which attracts visitors from all parts of Ladakh. The monastery is very rich in art and is extremely decorated. Rare Tibetan statues and scriptures are preserved here.

At Shay, there exists the Shay gumpa, where a colossal statue of Buddha has been installed by the King De-Idan rnam-rgyal (1645-1666 A.D.). It is made of brass but gold plated, studded with precious stones. The image of the Buddha is 40 feet high in a sitting pose and occupies two stories of the building. A Sacred lamp burns in this gumpa for the whole year for which butter is used.

Lama-yuru is situated at a distance of 60 miles from Leh on the Leh-Kargil road. It is known as Gyu-ru also and here we have numerous gumpas. One of these contains Avaalokiteshvara Spyān-ras-gzigs (Avalokita) with eleven heads and a thousand hands. These gumpas are the oldest religious buildings in Ladakh. These existed before the advent of Buddhism in Ladakh and were turned into Buddhist monasteries in about 1050 A.D.

A shrine in honour of Spyān-ras-gzigs was built by Tshedpal-rnam-rgyal at Leh. It houses a number of statues of the Lamaist reformer Tson-kha-pa. It is known as San-kar gumpa. There are other monasteries at every village in Ladakh.

VII

The Buddhist Monuments

“The Buddha, most excellent in the three worlds.”

Jainalankara

Kashmir's contribution to the development of Buddhism has been acknowledged by research scholars. Historical evidences mention a large number of Buddhist relics to have existed in this land. A detailed description of some important Buddhist sites and monuments needs to be given in the following pages.

Narendrabhavana :

Surendra, the son of Khagendra built a vihara, known as Narendrabhavana in the town of Soraka, in the Darada country.¹ Both the town and the vihara has not been traced.

Saurasavihara :

Surendra also built a vihara called Saurasa.² This vihara also remains unidentified.

1. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, Stein., I. p. 93

2. Ibid., I. p. 94

Jaloravihara :

Janaka established the vihara of Jalora, which may be identified with Zohlar in Zaingir, Spore, Kashmir.¹

Dharmaranyavihara :

Raja Asoka built a vihara in the town of Vitastatra. It was lofty and high. He also built stupas at Suskalettra. Both the towns have been identified as Vethavutur and Hukalitar, situated in Verinag and Badgham.² Some ancient relics are found at Verinag spring. At Kukalitar, a few statues of Buddha were found.

Krtyasramavihara :

Jaloka has been mentioned to have built the vihara of Krtyasrama. This place has been identified with the village Kitshom, near Baramulla, Kashmir.³ Ou-Kong mentions this vihara as Ki-tche.

Juskapuravihara :

Juska is said to have built a vihara at Juskapura, a village to the north of Srinagar.⁴

Huska has been mentioned to have built a vihara at Huskapura, mentioned as Hu-se-kia-lo by Hiuen Tsiang.⁵ It is known as Uskur now and is situated near Baramulla, Kashmir. Lalitaditya (725-753 A.D.) also built some stupas and viharas at Uskur.⁶

Amritabhavana :

Queen Amritaprahba built a vihara, known as Amritabhavana for the use of foreign monks. Ou-Kong mentioned

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1. Ibid., I. p. 98
 2. Ibid., I. pp. 102-103
 3. Rajatarangini, I. p. 147
 4. Ibid., I. p. 169
 5. Ibid., I. pp. 168-170
 6. Ibid., IV. 158

it as Ngo-mi-to-po-wan. Amritabhavana has been identified at Antbhavan, Vicharnag, 3 miles to the north of Srinagar. Remains of a vihara have been found at this place.¹

Lo-stonpavihara :

A Ladakhi guru is said to have built a stupa, called Lo-stumpa, during the reign of Meghavahana. It has not been located.²

Nadavana vihara :

Queen Yukadevi, is said to have built a vihara at Nadavana, which was wonderful and beautiful. Nadavana has been identified with Narvor in Srinagar, Kashmir. The vihara is non existent at present.³

Indradevibhavana :

Queen Indradevi is said to have built a vihara, called Indradevibhavanavihara. This vihara is non existent at present.⁴

Khadavavihara :

Queen Khadana is said to have built a vihara at Kadanyar near Baramulla, Kashmir. No traces have been found.⁵

Jayendravihara :

Jayendra, the maternal uncle of Parvarasena II built the vihara known as Jayendravihara. A colossal statue of Buddha was installed in it. Hiuen Tsiang has mentioned it as Che-ye-in-to-lo and on his arrival to Kashmir in

1. Ibid., III. p. 9

2. Ibid., III. p. 10

3. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, Stein., II. II

4. Ibid., II. p. 13

5. Ibid., III. p. 14

631 A.D. he stayed in it. This vihara was burned by Ksemagupta and its statue was melted down by him to make a statue of Siva.¹ Location of this vihara requires to be searched either at Chattabal,² Srinagar or at Ushkur in Baramulla.³ Attached villages of the Vihara, being given to the Khasa chief, indicate Ushkur as the correct alternative.⁴

Skandavhavanavihara :

Skandavhavanavihara was built by Skandagupta, one of the ministers of Yudhisthira. Its location has been determined as somewhere in the modern mohalla of Khandabavan in Srinagar, Kashmir. Nothing remains of this vihara.⁵

Kridaramavihara :

Lalituditya (725-753 A.D.) is credited to have constructed the Kridaramavihara, position where of is unknown.⁶

Rajavihara :

Rajavihara was built by Lalituditya at Parihaspura. It housed a colossal statue of Buddha besides other relics of gold and silver.⁷ Parihaspura was the new capital built by the King near the confluence of the river Jehlum and the river Sindh on a plateau between Panznor and Hartarath near Divar-ekamanpura. The plateau is nearly 2 miles long and 1 mile wide. The site of the capital and vihara is in ruins. Its material was transported by Skankravarman

1. Ibid., III. p. 355, VI. p. 171

2. Ibid., VI. pp. 172-173

3. Gilgit Manuscripts., Vo. I. p. 36

4. Rajatarangini., VI. p. 175

5. Ibid., III. p. 380

6. Ibid., IV. p. 184

7. Rajatarangini, Kalhan, Stein., IV. pp. 201-204

(883-902 A.D.) for the construction of Siva temples. Harsha also removed the remaining statues from this site. Examination of the site reveals that the Rajavihara was a quadrangle of 26 cells around a square courtyard paved with stones.¹ These cells were used by the monks. These are located, bases of other viharas.

Cankunavihara :

During, Latitaditya's reign, Cankuna built a vihara in which he placed golden statues of Buddha.² This vihara was built by him at Srinagar.³ Cankuna appears to be the title of one of the ministers of Lalitaditya. As he was a Turk, it is evident that he came from Sinkiang and bore a Chinese title Taiang Kiun, which has been Sanskritized by Kalhana.

Jayapidavihara :

Jiyadipa (754-784 A.D.) built a large vihara at Jayapura, in which he placed three statues of Buddha. Jayapura has been identified as Anderkot, near Sumbal in Kashmir.⁴

Ratnadevivihara :

Jayasimha's (1128-1149 A.D.) Queen Ratnadevi built a magnificent vihara at Ratinpur, now known as Ratinpora.⁵

Shadarhavana :

At Harwan, 2 miles away from the Shalimar garden in Srinagar, near the water reservoir, a very important Buddhist site was discovered by Mr. R.C. Kak in 1925 A.D.⁶

1. Ancient Monuments of Kashmir, Kak.
2. Rajatarangini, Kalhana. Trans. Stein., IV. p. 211
3. Ibid., IV. p. 215
4. Ibid., IV. p. 507
5. Ibid., VIII. pp. 2402, 2433
6. Ancient Monuments of Kashmir, Ram Chandra Kak., p. 105

He unearthed a stupa, a set of cells and a rectangular courtyard with diaper pebble walls. A large number of tiles with Kharoshthi numerals and beautiful motifs and human figures was found, which shows that the site belongs to the later period of the Kushanas in Kashmir.

Ahan :

At Ahan, near Sumbal, on the banks of a tiny lake, known as Ahansar, another important Buddhist site was located by Prof. F.M. Hassnain in 1962. He unearthed a pavement decorated with the same kind of Harwan tiles, some pebble style walls and a delapidated stupa. No further excavations have been done at the site.

Kuvanavihara :

It was specially constructed as a venue of the fourth Buddhist Council in Kashmir, held during the reign of Kanishka. It is also known as Kundalvanavihara.¹

Raithan and Rajagir :

The village of Raithan is at a distance of 12 Kilometers from Srinagar. It is situated in the vicinity of Yecchgam and Yecchkot, the original habitations of the Yakshas, the guardian tribes of the fourth Buddhist Council records. Many a Buddhist relics are found in the area, including the famous Budoha panel.

1. The History of Buddhism in India and Tibet, Trans., Obemiller., p. 97

VIII

The Way of the Buddha

“From unreal to the Real,
From darkness to the Light,
From death to the immortality.”

Buddhism spread in the Indo-Gangetic valley during the lifetime of Buddha. The first Council of the monks was held within a few weeks after the demise of the master in order to collect his precepts. It was presided over by Mahakasyapa. After nearly 100 years the second Council was held at Vaisali. It condemned the ten extra legal indulgences of the Vaisali monks, who not satisfied with the decision, separated from the mainstream and established Mahasanghika sect. This sect was the precursor of the Mahayana Buddhism. The third Council was held at Pataliputor, under the auspices of Ashoka (3rd century B.C.) after his conversion to Buddhism. He sent missions in different directions, such as Maccdonia, Syria, Egypt and Ceylon. He also got engraved rock edicts in different parts of his realm. His example was followed by other rulers. Hence Buddhism became a mass religion. Latter

the Kushana rulers, especially Menander, Kanishka, Hushka and Jushka patronised Buddhism. The 4th Council was held in Kashmir, some time in 1st century A.D.

Setback to Buddhism :

“A time came, when Hinduism began to reassert itself. Many Hindu kings came forward, and for a time, even sacrifices like ashwamedha were performed by some powerful Hindu rulers. Even before Shankracharya, who led a successful India-wide campaign against all non-vedic system of thought, a vigorous intellectual ferment had started in Hinduism. Shankaracharya however, put the seal on the efforts of all other campaigners and there was then a definite turn in the tide against Buddhism.”¹

During the Gupta period (4th-6th century A.D.) Buddhism lost royal patronage, but it continued to be popular with the masses. But during the post Gupta period Buddhism found royal patronage under King Harsovardhana (606-648 A.D.) of Kanauj. He provided special grants for the maintenance of many Buddhist monasteries, especially the Nalanda. His scholars went to Tibet to preach Buddhism. Having gained popularity in Bengal and Bihar, Buddhism spread towards the South, from which place its influence went to Malaya also, during the mediaval period of the Indian history. Buddhism disappeared from the land of its birth by the end of the 15th century A.D., but it made its way in other parts of the world.

Nepal :

Buddhism originated from Kapilavastu in Nepal.² Then it started developing in Bengal and Bihar. Ashoka, under

1. Bhagwan Buddha, R.R. Divakar., p. 160

2. Ibid., p. 24

instructions of Moggaliputra Tissa, accelerated its development in India and abroad.¹ Yekdevi, a Napalese princess was married to Meghavahana (438 A.D.).² She built a vihara at Nadavana.³ Buddhism continued to flourish in Nepal even during the 7th century, when it had started decaying in India.⁴ Jayapida, grandson of Lalitaditya invaded Nepal, during the 8th century A.D.⁵ One of the Buddhist scholars, who went to Nepal in the 13th century, was Sakiyasribhadra. He was a Kashmiri.⁶ Later, Man-tarayana penetrated into Nepal and it became an important centre of Tantric Buddhism. Sakiyasribhadra went to Tibet also to teach at the Sa-Skya monastery.

Afghanistan :

During the Kushana period, Buddhism received royal patronage and it gave a flip to this faith in Afghanistan. It became an important centre of Ghandhara art. Asoka had deputed a group of monks to Ghandhara including modern Afghanistan to spread the Dharma.⁷ Ghandhara art imbibed a strong influence of Greek-Roman art and it produced wonderful figures of the Buddhist divinities.

Central Asia :

Central Asia has remained a Buddhist country for several centuries. A large number of Buddhist stupas, viharas, manuscripts, paintings and relics have been found there. The first missionary, who brought Buddhism to Central Asia was, Vairochana. He was a Kashmiri Buddhist scholar, who built the first monastery at Khotan,⁸ He also intro-

1. Ibid., p. 165
2. Les Bouddhistes Kashmirians are Meyen Age, Jean Naudou., p. 10
3. Rajatarangini, Kalhana., II. p. 11
4. Buddha and the gospel of Buddhism, A. Coomaraswamy., p. 336
5. Rajatarangini, Kalhana, Trans. Stein., IV. p. 531
6. Pag Sam Jon Tang., p. xcvi
7. Bhagwan Buddha, R.R. Diwakar., p. 165
8. Ibid., p. 194

duced the Sarda alphabet in that region. Several Buddhist texts including the Dhammapada, the Udanavarga, and the Sariputra-Prakarana by Asvaghosa have been located in Central Asia.

During the 4th century A.D., many scholars went to Kucha, which had become an important seat of learning. This university was headed by the famous Buddhist Kumarajiva, a Kashmiri by birth, who had studied at Ushkur in Kashmir.¹ The monastery at Ushkur in Kashmir was visited by Hiuen Tsiang in 631 A.D. Kumarajiva was born at Chandigham, Lolab, Kashmir in the year 344 A.D. He studied at Ushkur and when he was 20, he became a bikhsu. From Lolab, he went to Gilgit and then crossed over to Central Asia. At Kucha, he stayed with another Kashmiri scholar, Vimalaksha.

The Chinese annexed Khotan and other areas around, in 382 A.D. Kumarajiva and other monks were arrested and taken to Kansu. He was set free to pursue his studies. His fame spread far and wide and he was invited by the Chinese Emperor to his capital. Kumarajiva devoted his life to the propagation of the Mahayana. By the time of his death in 413 A.D., he had translated 400 texts into the Chinese and had established 2 universities in China. Fa-Hien was one of his students.

China :

Buddhism was introduced into China from Central Asia, which served as a highway of Buddhism for several centuries. According to Chinese, Buddhism was introduced in China in about 217 B.C. China and Central Asia were linked through commerce from the dawn of civilization. Central Asian scholars went to China in the 1st century A.D. Emperor Ming-Ti of the Han dynasty deputed 18

1. William Gemmel in his introduction to the Diamond Sutra

scholars to study Buddhism at Khotan. After 2 years study, they returned to China in 67 A.D. and brought translated Buddhist texts into China.¹ During the reign of the Kushana rulers, many monks went to China for propagation of the Buddhist doctrine. Famous among the monks, who propagated Buddhism in China during the 4th and 5th centuries, are Kumarajiva, Buddhayasas, Sanghabhuti, Gautama Sangha deva, Punyatrata, Vimalaksha, and Gunavarman. Activities of Kumarajiva have been mentioned earlier. Vimalaksha and Buddhahadra, went to Nankin in China to work with Kumarajiva during 4th century A.D.²

Chen-Yen and Buddhahadra went to China via Burma from Tonkin; they sailed by boat and reached China. Both of them worked with Kumarajiva for some time in Changan. Buddhahadra is said to have collaborated with Fa-Hien. He is credited to have translated 15 Buddhist texts into the Chinese. Another Kashmiri monk, closely associated with Kumarajiva was Punyatrata. He worked on Buddhist texts under the guidance of Kumarajiva. Mention may be made of Buddhayasha, another Kashmiri scholar who visited China during the life time of Kumarajiva. He was invited to Kashgar by its ruler, who had convened a conference of 3000 monks. He lived at Kashgar for a number of years. He then proceeded towards China to get further guidance from Kumarajiva. He remained in China till the death of the master. Then he returned back to Kashmir where he translated 4 Buddhist texts into Chinese. Another Kashmiri monk, Dharmayasha is said to have lived in China from 407 to 415 A.D. and translated 2 Buddhist texts into Chinese.

It is an admitted fact that many Kashmiri scholars went to China for study as well as spreading of Buddhism. Their names and works are yet to be ascertained. Tien-si-tasi

1. The Way of the Buddha., p. 321

2. Les Bouddhistes Kashmirians are Meyan Age, Jean Naudou., p. 9

and Mu-la-shi-ki are the two Kashmirians in the list. Ratna-Chinta, one of the famous Kashmiri scholar remained in China for nearly 13 years from 693 to 706 A.D. Besides establishing a monastery there, he translated Ekastaradharani. During the Tang period, Prajnabala, amoghavajra and other scholars from Kashmir went to China.

Tibet :

Buddhism was introduced into Tibet in the 7th century A.D., through the influence of the Nepalese princess, who became the chief Queen of the Tibetan ruler, Srong-Tsan-Gaupo. During this period the Karkotas were in power in Kashmir. Both Hiuen Tsiang and Ou-Kong have mentioned that Buddhism flourished in the valley during their rule. The Tibetan ruler had sent a delegation to the Buddhist scholars to India headed by Thon-mi-sambhota. It was required of these scholars to prepare a script for the Tibetan language. Ton-mi-sambhota studied Buddhism in India and also adapted a new script, which was based on Sarda script of Kashmir. On his return to Tibet, a number of scholars from Nepal, China and India were invited to give their opinion about this script and these scholars included Ta Butta and Gantta from Kashmir. Thon-mi-sambhota prepared a grammar of the Tibetan language and these scholars were asked to give their comments on it. Thus the Kashmiri scholars greatly influenced Thon-mi-sambhota in his researches on the new script.

It was Padma Sambhova of Udiyana, who introduced Trantrik Buddhism in Tibet during the 8th century A.D.¹ He invited a number of Kashmiri Buddhists who had been his class fellows, when he himself had studied in Kashmir.² He lodged these Kashmiri Buddhists in the Psam-Yas-Vihara, in Tibet. Other Kashmirian scholars who went to Tibet are

1. J. Denikar and Monier Williams had equated Udiyana with Dardistan

2. Yeshey-Tshogyal

Ananta, Shanti Garbha, Subhati, Somanatha. They worked on the Tibetan alphabet, religion astrology and grammar. Some of the Kashmiri scholars went to Tibet on invitation and translated *Prajnapradheepika* in collaboration with Buddha Shri of Kashmir. He is the author of the Mahayana Upadesha-gatha.

Java :

Buddhism became popular in Java during the beginning of the 4th century. Many Buddhist monks from the south of India went to Java and other island to preach Buddhism. One of the Kashmiri monks, who visited Java, was Gunarvarman. He belonged to a princely family of Kashmir. He renounced the worldly life at the age of 20 and became a monk. He mastered most of the Buddhist texts and was given the title of Tripitaka charya. From Kashmir he went to South India and then to Ceylon. He remained there for some time, and then left for Java, where he did useful work in 424 A.D. His fame spread in other south-east Asian countries and he was invited by various Buddhist Sunghas. During the 8th and the 9th century A.D. Buddhism reached its zenith under the royal patronage of the Sailendra Emperors in Java, Sumatra, Bali, Borneo and other islands. Success of the Mahayana in Java was due to the Kashmiri monks. Gunarvarman also received invitation from the Chinese scholars. He reached Nanking in 431 A.D. and received a tremendous welcome from the people as well as from the Emperor, who came in person to meet him. This great Kashmiri scholar passed away at Nanking in 432 A.D.

Japan :

Buddhism came to Japan through Korea, in the later part of the 6th century A.D.¹ The first Buddhist monk to

1. Buddhism, Kenneth Saunders., p. 55

go to Japan was Shiba-Tassu of Korea, who established the first monastery on the soil of Japan.¹ It was Emperor Shotoku (593-622), who set up a seat of learning at Nara, which developed into a museum of Asiatic art. He was himself a scholar and studied the Mahayana texts and wrote a commentary.

The Tempyo period (710-784) was the golden period of Buddhism in Japan, because it was during this period that literature, art, and rituals developed and flourished.

Among the Indian monks, who worked in Japan during the 7th century was Bhiksu Hodo, known as Darmapatha. Among other scholars who went to Japan to teach there, are Bodhisena, Bodhidharma and Subhakara.²

The three manuscripts of Bhaisajyagru-sutra were found at Gilgit in 1931. The Bhaisajyagru is one of the most popular Buddhas in Japan, and was introduced in the temple of Yakuusiji in the 7th century.³ It requires to be examined as to how Abidharma Kosha of Vasubandhu (320-400 A.D.) and Satyasiddhi of Harivarman (250-350 A.D.) have influenced the Kusha and the Jojitsu in Japan.⁴

1. Bhagwan Buddha, R.R. Diwakar., p. 190

2. Hindu Superiority, Har Bilas Sarda., pp. 148-149

3. Bulletin de l'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient., pp. 33-37

4. The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy, J. Takakusu

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